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# SKI MAGAZINE

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## COVER

It's Bill Whitcher of Fairbanks, in William King's photo, who's braving the icy winds of Cleary Summit in his sealskin pants. Perhaps this picture will persuade Andre to stock this item in his New York shop next season, together with his marvelous sealskin jackets. For the low-down on Fairbanks skiing, turn to page 17.

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## Let Them Stay for the A-K!

In Zermatt, before the holidays, as the U.S. women's alpine team began to show great promise, coach Pepi Gabl asked the National Ski Association to let the girls train and race as a team, with coach and manager, for another month—long enough to take in the Arlberg-Kandahar at St. Anton. The NSA turned him down, and so it appears that one month of world-class international competition every other year is all our top racers are going to get. At that rate, since the next Olympics are scheduled for Squaw Valley, they will have to wait four years to race in Europe again.

This is no way to produce winning teams, or even to give our teams a good chance of winning. The skiers we send to the FIS or Olympics every two years have been isolated from international racing; they are either completely inexperienced or must make a fresh readjustment to the temper of European competition; the courses are unfamiliar, and even our skiers' starting order in the world championships depends upon their performance in a few preliminary races, in which they are forced to make a desperate effort. No sooner is the big race over, than we fly them home again for another two years in the "minor leagues." But if we ever want to do consistently more than merely take part in world championship events, our skiers must compete in *all* the very big races—and not every other year, but *every* year.

The Arlberg-Kandahar, for example, is a very big race. In odd years, it is the unofficial world championship. To Europeans it ranks just as high as the FIS, and the competition is even tougher: instead of only four Austrians, at least eight will start in each event, and the other Alpine nations will also be strongly represented. This year the A-K will be held at St. Anton, its birthplace, during the first week of March.

That gives our boys and girls another whole month to get ready. It is a great opportunity which should not be missed. All the other important national teams are being kept intact for this event. Yet ours are to be disbanded, and the only Americans to compete would be such as have private backing or can pay their own expenses—and these lucky few would lack proper coaching, would lack a manager to fight their "political" battles for them. In recent years, Europeans competing in this country have also been invited as individuals, and at times which usually conflicted with key European events such as the A-K. How much better it would be if, as American racers gained in stature, the exchange of competitors—between the A-K, for example, and the American International races—could be put on an official basis, the various national ski associations providing the organization, funds, coaches and managers!

Let's keep our teams in training for the A-K this year! What's the problem? Money? Collect it! Conflicting races? Postpone them! Let's keep our teams, both alpine and nordic, in the running internationally year after year!

# Ski Readers Write In

## Dope on Teflon

Sirs:

Would you be so kind to let me know by return air whether Teflon soles are now used much in the U.S.A.? I wish to write an article in our Ski Annual and would like to have more information. Is it as fast as the British skiers say? Is it put on to skis by any manufacturer?

Oscar A. Coberger  
Alpine Sports Depot

Arthur Pass, Southern Alps, N. Z.

• There has been quite a bit of experimenting with Teflon as a plastic base for skis. It has one of the lowest coefficients of friction of any known substances; however, the coefficient of friction is figured from a standing start, and the behavior of running surfaces at high speeds where the factors of suction and friction heat enter in appears to be a different matter. At least it appears from informal tests at high speed that Teflon is slower than a good wax job. One of the British Bobsled teams at the last Olympics completely spoiled its chances by putting Teflon on the sled runners for the first run. On the second run without Teflon they did much better.

The stick-on Teflon appears to hold as well as vinyl bases which are applied by similar methods. While it scars and tears easily it can be repaired with little trouble. Manufacturers like Kästle, attempting to bond the material to the ski bottoms, found the process tends to flatten out the skis, and they were forced to make skis with extreme camber in order to compensate for this effect.

This is what happened when the publisher of SKI took sixty feet of Teflon to Europe two seasons ago to be applied to Kästle skis at the factory, for use by U. S. racers. The stuff caused so much trouble the skis were not ready in time for the Olympics—and this was just as well, since when they were tested later they were found to be slower than the regular models.

That is the summation of our experience to date with this material, which has proved as exasperating as it appeared promising. On the other hand it may be that our haphazard experiments with it have not really proved anything and that Teflon may yet come into its own—Ed.

## Hi!

Sirs:

For some time I have been drooling over the advertisements of Myers' Jamaica Rum and wishing to try this hot buttered concoction. Needless to say, your December issue of SKI fell open to pages 30-31, whereon lay two recipes for this bit of cheer.

Before me now are all of the ingredients and utensils necessary to brew the "à la Stowe." Let's see, four quarts of water—hmmm—that's one gallon—this old diaper pail will hold that. Sugar is okay, but I wonder about this New York State

Now this is  
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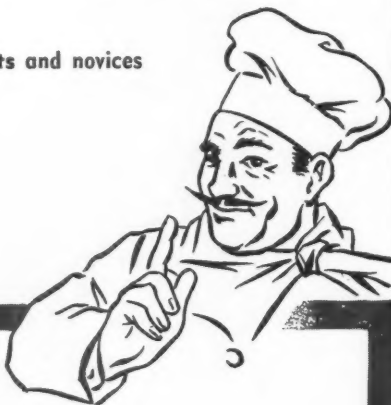
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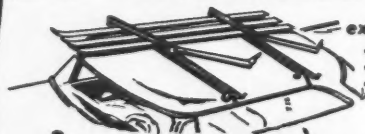
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maple syrup. Ah yes, the cinnamon sticks—everybody loves cinnamon, not to mention cloves.

Since I cook not with gas, but with electricity, this steeping will take a while; but in the meantime let me sample the bouquet of Myers' Jamaica Rum—ahhh! This also gives me the chance to gather the latest about who's doing the wedeln, so I'll be back when the steeping is done. (I wonder if this steeping business has anything to do with the "National?")

Well, here we are—all steeped and ready for stewing—ha!

Now for my eight-ounce ceramic mug (actually holds nine ounces, but I'm not advertising this around). One pat of butter and one and one-half ounces of rum—ah, that bouquet. Now for the base—oops, *must* stir the butter and rum briskly. This base reminds me that my skis need some, but later, later—not now.

Hmmm. Sonofagun—this here four quarts of base is not fitting in my eight-ounce ceramic mug. I am now re-reading the instructions. "Add above prepared base after stirring briskly." Well, no amount of stirring is going to stretch this eight-ounce mug to hold four quarts of base; and besides, one and one-half ounces doesn't seem like enough rum. Well, what the hell—this calls for action. There goes the bottle of rum into the diaper pail. I now stir once more, letting the butter fall where it may. Whew—sure smells good.

Must be done. I'll just dip my eight-ounce (actually nine, hee, hee) mug into—oops! What happened? That mug just disappeared right there into that liquid. Better check next time—didn't know I had a rum-soluble mug.

I can tell, this will grow on me. Heh, heh—one thing I forgot—heh, heh. No throng, admiring—that means I drink this all by myself—hic! I'll finish this later—the letter, that is.

— — — Much later. This stuff is restoring all right, but mostly to bed. Wish I knew how to mix just eight ounces at a time.

Paul F. Parks

Summit, N. J.

## A Lift for Down Under

Sirs:

A good friend of mine in Connecticut has paid a subscription for me to SKI and I must say, as a skier of many years, I am pleased.

I am a foundation member of the Ski Club of Victoria and financially interested in one of the club's chalets. I have been asked to obtain the names of the leading manufacturers of ski tows, chair lifts, etc., in the United States. I would be very much obliged if you would be kind enough to supply me with the names of a few companies which you could recommend.

T. M. Marriott

Victoria, Australia

• A copy of our SKI SHOP BIBLE has been sent to you, which contains a list of manufacturers. The major difficulty in procuring ski lifts for Australia has been the restrictions on currency exchange, a problem which needs solving. Let us know if you obtained any lifts for Australia—Ed.

# SKI THE LAURENTIANS

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as a starter for a new hotel. Any reliable individual with thirty to forty thousand dollars additional to invest should write the Ski Club Chile, Casilla 2857, Santiago, Chile.

The ski resort of Farellones is only thirty-one miles and one and one-half hours by car from the capital of Chile, Santiago, which has 1,500,000 inhabitants. The village has over seventy houses with about a 700-bed capacity, mostly bunkrooms. Several clubs and inns provide minimum comforts. The 300 wealthy members of the ski club urgently need a new, modernized hotel. The rapidly growing number of Chilean skiers assures the success of a first-rate hotel in Farellones.

Each year more Americans are flying to Chile to ski. Argentina and Brazil are not far—by air.

The area has four lifts with a vertical rise of 3,000 feet, including a modern double chair lift over a mile long. Another resort, accessible through Farellones, has a chair lift. The Farellones lifts were organized by myself and my Chilean wife Mimi. We offer our help to anyone interested in such an investment and can be reached at Casilla 1844, Santiago.

Clifton F. Leatherbee

Chile

## Set 'em Back

Sirs:

I have a pair of Head Standard skis seven feet, three inches long. I am six feet tall, weigh 170 pounds and wear size ten and one-half Henke boots. The distance from the heel of my ski to the extreme toe of my boot is forty-four and one-half inches. You recommend forty-two and one-half inches or less in your October issue.

I ski wedeln on the most difficult slopes at Aspen. Please tell me what the forty-four and one-half inch dimension does to my skiing and why? Also what dimension would you recommend?

Harry C. Nordgren

Topeka, Kansas

● Your forward binding position is less disturbing on limber Heads than it would be on stiff racing skis, yet you would notice an improvement if you moved your bindings two inches back where they should be. The skis would ride steadier on the straightaways, plane better in deep snow, turn easier without the help of bumps and ruts and be less liable to

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"catch" on the outside front edge in turns. Your skiing would become smoother, because the temptation to heel-lift in turns would be reduced. Particularly while skiing under western conditions, you should move your bindings back.—Ed.

## Stiffarming Slalom

Sirs:

I thought you might be interested in the enclosed photo. Having always been quite an avid skier, I integrated the slalom technique into an incentive conditioning program. We clock each back through a 300-yard course of slalom



gates. If he has good reactions and pursues a logical course through the gates, he gets a high grade for the test.

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John N. Hooper, Head Football Coach  
Upsala College  
East Orange, N. J.

## Broken Bones

Sirs:

After twelve weeks in a hospital and nineteen months in a non-walking cast I am afraid I can't agree with your article "Fall or No Fall" in the December issue.

While skiing out of control on ice (how was I to know), covered by windblown snow, pride was my last thought. But I did have time to decide to fall or ride it out. I elected the latter and wound up my christie with a leg of six fractures. After the snaps and crackles, when I was completely at a stop, I fell and did not pick my spot but sat down as gently as I knew how.

I've since skied over one hundred times with a steel plate in my leg and came out with no more than a runny nose.

Bob Guinta

Glenbrook, Conn.

● As we said in the article, in such a case it's a good idea to fall right away rather than try to ride it out.—Ed.

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

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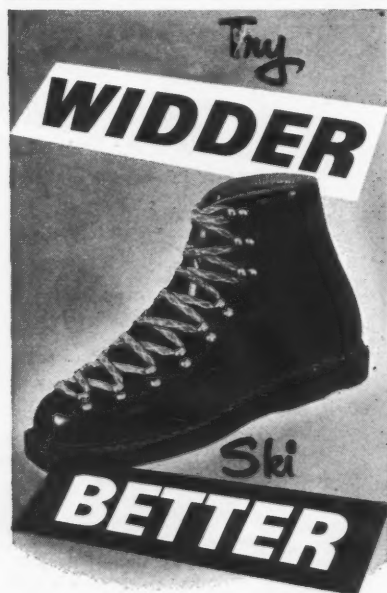


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**Not Quite Reckless**

Sirs:

Right after Dick Buek's death I received a letter from a close friend of his who bought a plane and had been flying and learning from Dick all summer. [As a ski racer Buek had established a fine record over several years, in spite of numerous injuries.—Ed.]

He pointed out that the newspapers had been in error by concluding Dick was practicing stalls at low altitude over a lake when he fatally crashed. This friend stated Dick would never practice stalls below 1,000 feet even at sea level. At the 6,000-foot level of Lake Norden he would have wanted even more than a 1,000-foot margin above it. Then he said there were bad icing conditions in the area that day and undoubtedly the carburetor iced up, the engine conked out, and Dick couldn't dump the plane into the lake gently enough.

Dick had crashed into the same lake a couple of years ago while towing water skiers with a long rope, because he had run out of gas. Not bright, of course, but it seems likely that it taught him a lesson. Afterward he figured out an emergency procedure for landing on a lake in case of plane trouble. (Dick had taught it to my informant.) This was to fly as low and slow as possible over the water, closely paralleling the shore. Then pancake in with tail low. Apparently there was no time to adopt this procedure.

Tragically, Dick's own plane was at this time having a higher horsepower engine installed with fuel injection, which all but eliminates icing. If his plane had had these improvements he might not have crashed.

There is no question that compared to most of us Dick was a reckless daredevil. Yet he should not be described so carelessly. A mutual friend, who had helped him learn to fly, said he was a fine and talented pilot, though not exactly cautious. Note that he did not consider Dick reckless. This fellow has crop-dusted for over ten years in a region thick with electric wires, and does most of his work at under twenty-foot altitudes. He is still alive, so must be cautious himself. I've flown with him in mountains and actually felt he was too cautious. I respect his opinion of Dick Buek, who was quite a guy and deserves better than the California papers gave him.

Edward Scott

Ketchum, Ida.

**Enthusiastic Pupil**

Sirs:

Whenever I read about the "new style" of skiing I feel that there is considerable confusion throughout the country as to the best approach to wedeln.

I shall never forget my first impression of that beautiful way of skiing as executed by a European instructor named Costa Truedson on the staff of the Mt. Snow ski school. He simply seemed to soar like a bird, without body rotation or visual effort, enjoying himself as much as we enjoyed looking at him.

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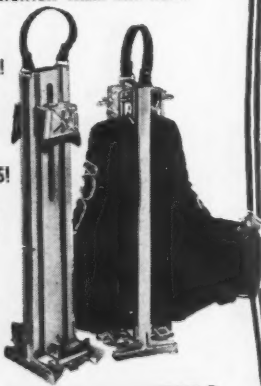
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Robert Wrisley

New York City, N.Y.

### Too Many Lifts?

Sirs:

Rereading my article, "Too Many Lifts" (December SKI), I note an omission which may be deceptive to some readers. It was perhaps not made entirely clear that the survey covered only the eastern part of the country, and that the various opinions expressed referred only to this part of the country.

It may well be that additional lifts are economically justified in the west—Colorado, New Mexico and the Pacific Northwest, for instance. In fact, after surveying the situation in Aspen and observing the traffic flow there, I had no hesitancy in recommending to the directors of the lift corporation that they build two additional lifts in the area. It may well be that within a year another one may be needed.

On the other hand, the threatened closing of the Reno Ski Bowl and one or two other smaller areas indicates that there are already soft spots in the west as well.

One of the recent developments which has reduced the ski traffic to eastern resorts somewhat is the great increase in the tendency of eastern skiers to travel to Europe or the west, with no compensating flow of visitors from these regions to the eastern U. S.

Roland Palmado

New York City, N. Y.

### Hard hit!

Sirs:

No renewal for us. Marriage, kids and a house have not only eliminated skiing but sports cars, motorcycles and airplanes. Tough!

Roger A. Krey

Summit, N. J.

● Which did you give up first?—Ed.

### Four Bits, Three Cheers

Sirs:

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## ALASKA: an adventure in skiing *continued*

**U**P IN ALASKA, towering three vertical miles from base to summit, lies the highest mountain in North America—20,320-foot Mt. McKinley. For a view of this magnificent peak, you can drive through McKinley National Park over eighty-seven miles of new highway to a point twenty miles from the mountain itself. Then you turn around and drive back—unless you are equipped to pack in and back on foot, over rugged terrain. That's all you can do: look at it. It's a bit like putting a fine Stradivarius in a glass case where everybody can look at it but nobody can play it.

This annoys nobody more than it annoys Bradford Washburn of Boston, scientist, mountaineer and the continent's leading connoisseur of Alaskan peaks. "It doesn't make sense," he says. "They let automobiles in the park, and let old ladies see the view. But the park service won't permit aircraft of any sort to land there, and in effect won't let people ski and climb there. For the only practical access to the mountains is by means of ski-wheel planes or helicopters." Let alone the fact that the park service saw fit to stop the highway twenty miles short of where the skiing is.

The best skiing, Washburn says, is not on McKinley itself, although the western side of the mountain has some magnificent slopes. The terrain in many places in the foothills and nearby massifs is "simply fabulous," as may be seen from the photograph of 13,220-foot Mt. Silverthrone on the preceding page. With a little cooperation—that is to say, a complete change of national

park policy—on the part of the authorities, much of this skiing would be conveniently accessible. Outside of the park itself—around Juneau, for example—some excellent terrain is reached via helicopter service. On the high slopes, conditions are perfect late in the season—April through June.

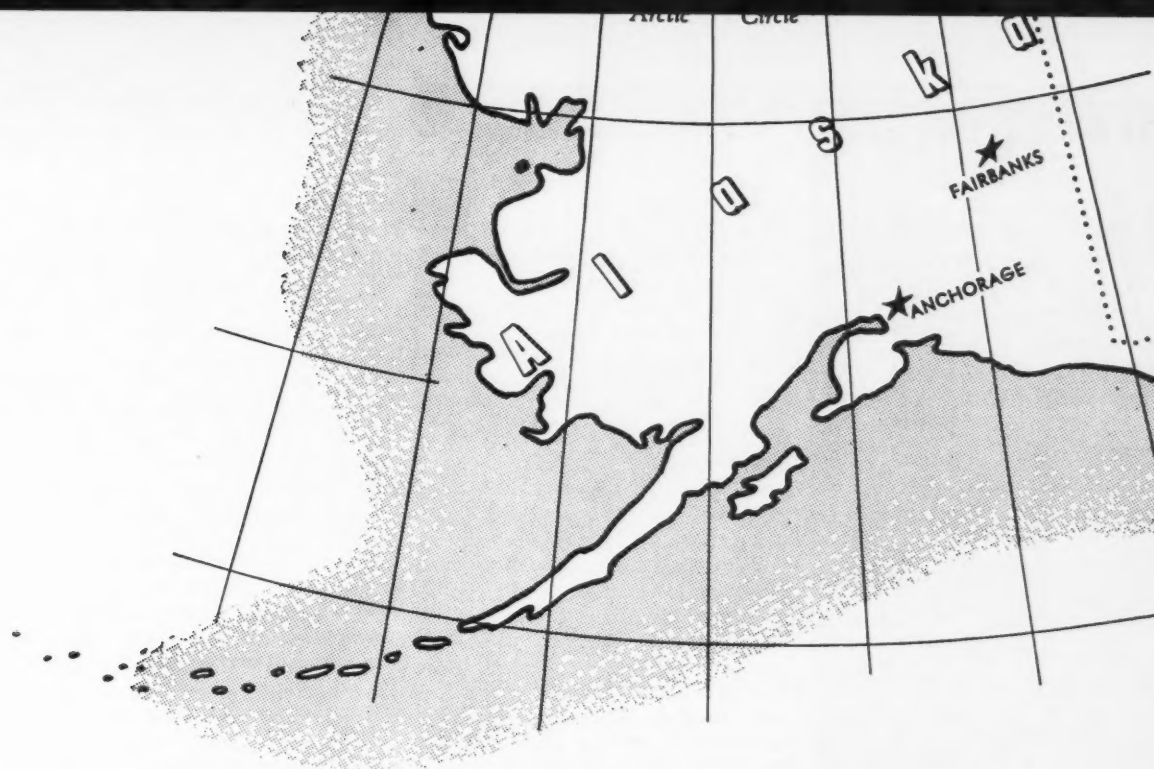
One of the most attractive features of Alaska for skiers, climbers and other sportsmen living in the east, Washburn points out, is the fact that a round-trip airline ticket from New York costs only about \$150.00 more to Alaska than to the west coast. From the west coast, of course, regular service to Alaska is offered by Pacific Northern Airlines.

Alaska is truly a "last frontier" for skiers. Not only will the U.S. National Park Service, already yielding in the states proper, hold out there longest with its wilderness policy; but full-scale ski development in other parts of the territory has yet to come. The largest ski areas still depend on rope tows for uphill transportation: Alaska's first modern lift, a Poma, went into operation at Elmendorf Air Force Base this season. On the other hand the low timber line, reliable snowfall and long season are natural advantages bound to hasten ski development as well as attract skiers from outside the territory.

Beginning on the opposite page are two articles describing the state of the sport at two Alaskan centers of skiing and population. As you will see, Alaskans like their powder dry, and never mind the thermometer!



The towering hulk of McKinley: accessible to sightseers, but forbidden to skiers



by WILLIAM J. KING

**FAIRBANKS**—When the average skier feels the temperature drop to the zero mark, he starts making tracks for the nearest well-heated lodge. From Stowe to Squaw Valley, nothing fills the empty places around the fireplace or creates a demand for hot buttered rum faster than a minus reading on the thermometer.

But to one breed of skier, the prospect of zero temperatures amounts to an engraved invitation from mother nature to flock to the mountains. For these hardy souls do their skiing in the frigid interior of Alaska, and they thrive in weather that leaves their stateside brethren cold.

Concentrated in the Interior's Tanana Valley—where the mercury dallies at fifty below more often than the local chamber of commerce likes to admit—there is a hard core of Alaskans who like to ski and are willing to try it in *any* weather. The intensity of their interest is aptly reflected in the phenomenal growth of a sport that early critics once called an "impractical curiosity" into one of the most popular forms of recreation in the territory.

Alaskans have always been able, if disinclined, to travel in cold weather. Old sourdoughs learned early from the natives that the best preventive for frostbite is a well-chinked cabin and a roaring Yukon stove. Except in cases of extreme emergency, the oldtimers stick pretty close to the hearth when the ice fog settles down. No one has yet succeeded in persuading them to go sliding over the countryside on a pair of glorified sled runners. It's the young people who are doing the skiing.

In the interior, the center of skiing activity is Fairbanks, the territory's second largest city with a population of 35,000. Located in the Tanana Valley about 120 miles south of the Arctic Circle, Fairbanks promises to develop into a ski area of sizable proportions. Three miles out of town, the University of Alaska has fourteen miles of rugged cross-

FAIRBANKS continued on page 40 ►

by HUGH CRUIKSHANK JR.

**ANCHORAGE**—How fares the skier in Alaska?

If one can ski in the Andes, in the mountains of New Zealand and Australia, in the iron fastnesses of the Soviet Union, then surely Alaska, the land of winter and the midnight sun, must be paradise to the hardy skier. For it is common knowledge that this far northern territory consists largely of snow and mountains, ice and igloos, glaciers and gold camps—you need but ask anyone who has never been there. Surely, then, the skiing must be fabulous, the conditions ideal, the winters immeasurably long.

And all this is so. Sort of.

It is possible, in and about the Anchorage area, Alaska's population center, to ski from mid-October to June, to ski in powder weeks on end, to tan in April and ski in shorts in May. But it is also possible for a November day—in the second month of winter, yet—to blossom forth warmer than the same day in Miami, Florida; for a searing Chinook wind to denude the peaks of white in January; for a snow-laden winter storm—Siberian in origin, it goes without saying—to so clog the roadways leading outward from the city that mere man, as distinguished from ardent skier, is content solely to plow his way clear to the nearest market or drug store. In few words, though the Anchorage skier has access to some of the most inexpensive, if not elaborate, skiing in the world, and can if he desires range far afield into vast mountain playgrounds, he finds that man and nature serve up considerable frustrations.

There is the matter of his organized facilities. He does much of his skiing on the open slopes of the ski bowl at Arctic Valley, where his club-owned tows are located. And Arctic Valley, which he shares jointly with the military of both Fort Richardson and Elmendorf Air Force Base, who also own and operate facilities there, is not only situated in part on the military reservation but can be reached only by

ANCHORAGE continued on following page ►


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an access road running through the Fort. The gate at the foot of this mountain is held by armed guards; guns mean authority, authority red tape, red tape regulations, and regulations, it seems, frustration to the skier.

However burning his enthusiasm, he finds that there is little to be done toward eliminating the obstacles imposed by military requirements: there is, after all, that fur-clad behemoth little more than Piper Cub cruising range to the westward, and the primary mission of the Alaska Command does *not* concern the encouragement of skiing or the enlargement of ski areas.

And the weather? Too cold or too cloudy, too windy or too warm, the weather inevitably seems exactly right only when winter is receding at so frightening a pace that the skier catches himself wishing frigid, Decemberly conditions would again prevail. Mark Twain, of course, did all that can presently be done about the weather, by writing of it. But the Anchorage skier can be consoled with the fact that his winter weather, accepted lore to the contrary, is markedly similar to that of northern New England, differing largely in that it lasts a month or so longer. (One thing he can depend upon; there will be one real cold snap during the ski season of at least a week's duration, during which the temperature will plummet to  $-20^{\circ}$  or more and stay there, day and night. He can plan

ahead, for this bitter interlude, winter after winter, consistently arrives on precise schedule—sometime between the months of October and May.)

Thus his frustrations. The weekend can dawn bright, clear and sparkling; but this, the skier has learned laboriously, is no guarantee that his little bit of heaven on earth awaits him at Arctic Valley. Whatever force is at work, whether set in motion by nature or by man, he can expect the unexpected: military alert, too much snow, too little snow, wind drifts on the access road, army payday, unseasonal thaw (much of Alaska's weather in this "banana belt" is unseasonal), gusty slope-baring winds, special holidays.

Or it may be something of his own doing, such as signing up on one of the Anchorage Ski Club's week-end flying excursions. Though typical of the average Alaskan's air-mindedness these can be exhausting: the annual flight to Kodiak and the Navy's ski development, for example, which is a five hundred-mile round trip, ordinarily departs late Saturday afternoon, crams in dances, parties, skiing, boating and sightseeing, and returns late the following night.

In truth, though, the Anchorage skier has it pretty good. If he skims limberly and with balance over the frustrations that appear mogul-like on his course, he can enjoy immense compensation. With his fellow club members—they usually



**BELOW-ZERO** temperatures are sole hindrance to uninhibited skiing on powder and open slopes at Arctic Valley near Anchorage. This photo shows 1,500-foot tow and ski club cabin where all nearby skiers have gone to unfreeze themselves.

number in excess of five hundred—and the many hundreds of GI's who use Arctic Valley free of charge, he can avail himself of seven rope tows, varying in length from a short bunny tow to tows running 1,750 and 1,800 feet up a precipitous mountainside; and two lodges, one owned by the Army and the other erected and maintained by the ski club. And though he may dream longingly of chair lifts and T-bars and mile-long runs, he can console himself with the knowledge that the cost of his skiing during Arctic Valley's five- to six-month season (\$15.00 per single skier, \$25.00 per family) wouldn't keep him in hot wine for a week at a resort Outside (i.e., in the States). Despite the relative primitiveness of his ski area, he can count on compiling more skiing miles, more skiing hours per season than any of his counterparts Outside, not simply because the winter is so long but also because Arctic Valley lies a scant sixteen miles from the center of Anchorage. He can ski Wednesday afternoons and evenings, all day and part of the night on Saturdays and Sundays, and on holidays.

Where military matters conflict with his skiing schedule, he has, running northeast and south from the Anchorage plain, the vast ranges of the Talkeetna and Chugach Mountains in which to tour or to climb. Too, there are several smaller developments close by, where professional instruction can be obtained, and a city ski bowl at which free instruction for Anchorage youth is sponsored by local Lions and undertaken by volunteer instructors from the ski club. If a club trip is scheduled, there are tows or Sno-Cats and organized ski clubs in such far-flung places as Juneau and Homer, Fairbanks and Kodiak. (Rumor has it that even the Naval Station at Adka, far down the Aleutian Chain, boasts a ski tow, but no overnight trip has yet been run that thousand miles or more.) Or the Anchorage skier can drive: northeast to the Little Susitna area serving skiers from the town of Palmer, ninety miles farther up the Glenn Highway to a private development, seventy miles south on the Seward Highway to still another private area. If he looks to the future, he can invest in a private corporation that is gradually developing a commercial area on Mt. Solar at Girdwood, fifty miles to the south.

Thus, wherever he skis, whatever his tastes, the Alaskan skier sits literally on top of the world.

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958



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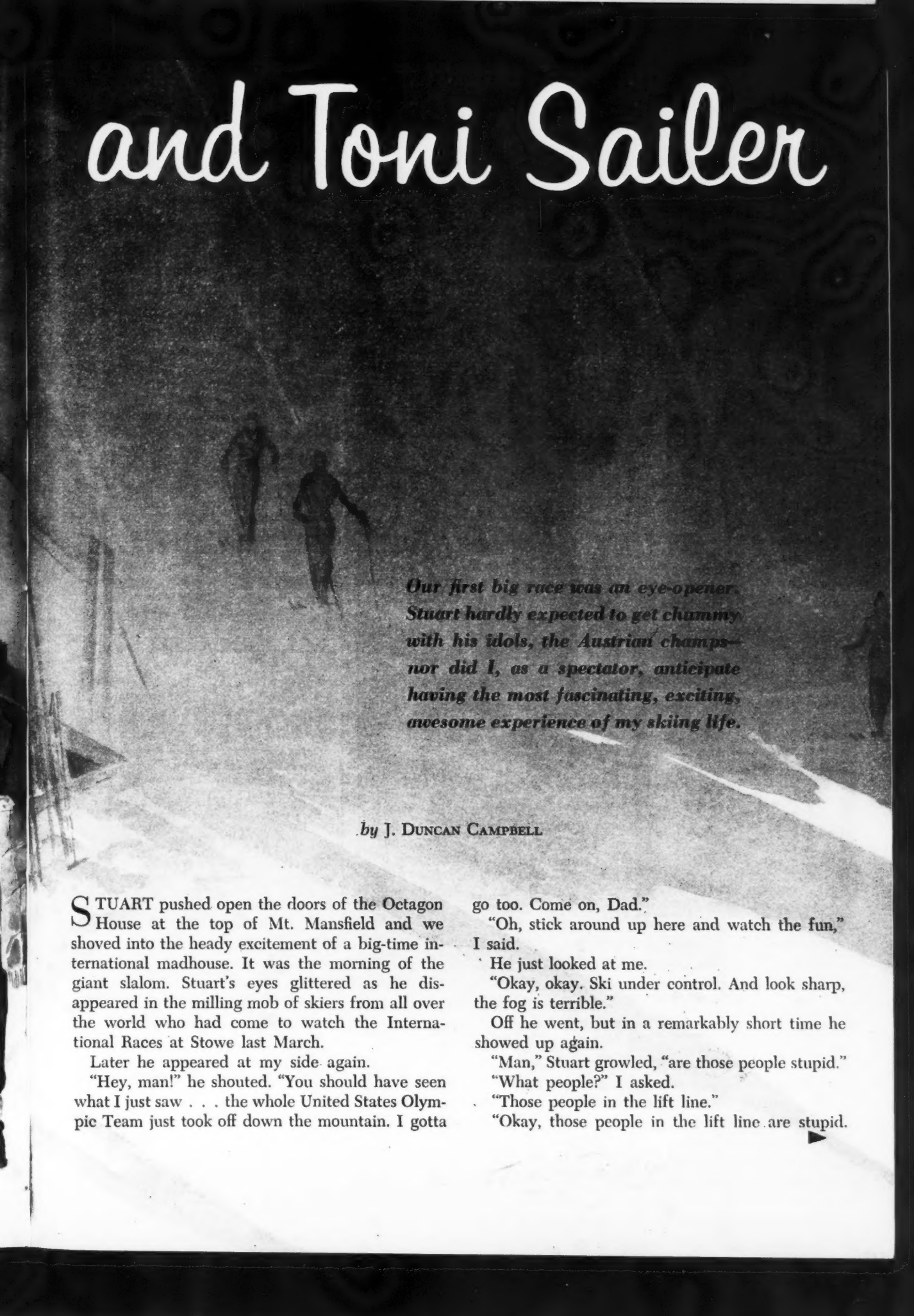


# My Son Stuart



*For him, of course, the sun broke through momentarily and bathed the famous white skull cap in holy light just before the count-down. . . .*

# and Toni Sailer



*Our first big race was an eye-opener. Stuart hardly expected to get chummy with his idols, the Austrian champs—nor did I, as a spectator, anticipate having the most fascinating, exciting, awesome experience of my skiing life.*

by J. DUNCAN CAMPBELL

STUART pushed open the doors of the Octagon House at the top of Mt. Mansfield and we shoved into the heady excitement of a big-time international madhouse. It was the morning of the giant slalom. Stuart's eyes glittered as he disappeared in the milling mob of skiers from all over the world who had come to watch the International Races at Stowe last March.

Later he appeared at my side again.

"Hey, man!" he shouted. "You should have seen what I just saw . . . the whole United States Olympic Team just took off down the mountain. I gotta

go too. Come on, Dad."

"Oh, stick around up here and watch the fun," I said.

He just looked at me.

"Okay, okay. Ski under control. And look sharp, the fog is terrible."

Off he went, but in a remarkably short time he showed up again.

"Man," Stuart growled, "are those people stupid."

"What people?" I asked.

"Those people in the lift line."

"Okay, those people in the lift line are stupid."

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### My Son Stuart continued

Why?"

"Well, gee whiz," he explained, "there he was right there, walking right past them, dragging his long-thongs just like anybody else, and nobody even recognized him, they just went right on talking. Gee whiz, you'd think somebody would have looked at him or something!"

I smiled. "Did you speak to him?"

"No," he said. His expression indicated clearly that I knew he was too shy to do that. "But he put his skis on right beside me!" He grinned, then was gone again.

After a while I noticed a Japanese coming up the lift. As he got off he passed near me, and I screwed up my courage and said, "Good morning, what do you think of the conditions?" (I expected him to say that of course the race would have to be postponed, because the visibility was so impossible that to run the giant slalom would be suicide.)

He looked at me as if I were slightly childish. "Well," he said, "as you see, I have not been down yet, so I don't know."

I nodded just as if I understood him. (Later, I figured out that he meant the snow conditions. Coming up through that pea soup, it had never occurred to him that he might break his fine neck in the fog!) As he adjusted his laces, I realized that he would have to ski down a comparatively easy trail, the Lord, to the top of the race course on the National. Here was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to ski with the great Chiharu Igaya!

I pulled on my mittens hastily as he poled off, noticing the large number of attractive women who were watching, and feeling the great weight of the Polaroid camera on my belt. With part of my mind I studied Igaya's technique, as I followed him.

The divided attention had the expected results. I zipped down that first steep pitch wildly, teetering back on my heels, and fell on my camera. Scrambling up and cursing, I watched Igaya ski off into the fog. He did nothing spectacular. That was just it. He was obviously going somewhere rapidly on skis, but he looked like a man going to the corner store for something. I shook my head sadly, brushing the snow absent-mindedly from my wet seat.



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I found my way to the top of the men's giant slalom course, where I was overtaken by a group, one of whom I recognized as Sepp Ruschp. Making like an alert newspaperman, I asked him brightly, "What do you think of the conditions, Sepp?"

He looked at me piercingly, then stamped his skis on the snow. Remember, he was then surrounded by fog so thick you could just barely make out the first pair of flags ten feet away.

"Hmm, it's nize und hard up here," he said with great satisfaction. "We shall zee how it iss down below." With that he swished off into the mist like a boy of fourteen and left me wondering if there was something the matter with my eyesight that morning. Everything looked so foggy!

People were passing me steadily now, so I traversed the National nonchalantly, taking care to lean far into the mountain, of course. There at the other side I would stop (ostensibly to study the next combination of gates, which I couldn't see). When I thought nobody was looking, I would kick-turn around real quick-like, and repeat. (The National, brother, is steep. I mean steep.) I was so glad that Stuart wasn't anywhere around.

By the time I got to the bottom there was the most fabulous lift line that I have ever seen. Trying to look important, I passed the line, feeling the killing glances in my gizzard every step. What a relief to show my borrowed press pass and get up into the protecting fog again!

When I got back to the start of the race course I ran into an old friend who turned out to be chief steward of the races. So I stuck with him immediately. Just about that time I spotted Toni Sailer—he looks exactly like his pictures, I mean. At last I opened my sagging belt and broke out the camera.

My friend the chief steward was polishing up his German on Sailer and Molterer. I took the first of the snapshots. When I took the developed picture out of the camera and handed it to Sailer, he glanced at it, looked at me, at Molterer, at the camera, at the picture again, and then burst out with one word, loudly and with feeling, "Fantastisch!"

Just then I spotted Stuart. I gesticulated wildly, pointing to Sailer from behind his head. Stuart came forward without too much hesitation, shook hands with Sailer, Molterer and



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the chief steward. We all talked at once. Sailer and Stuart jabbered happily, and simultaneously, at each other, in English and German. Just a couple of kids.

Sailer took his time about getting ready. We stood beside him while he put on his skis. He didn't start until the race was under way, and he was number seven. When he had the thongs tight, he suddenly picked up his poles, jabbed them into the snow in front of him, kicked up the skis about three feet off the snow and slammed down onto them as though he wanted to split them in two. Then he jumped around to his left, and bent his knees right to the skis. After that he flexed his arms a bit and took a couple of deep breaths. That was his total preparation for the race. By then number six was in the slot, so he wandered up slowly to get into position. For him, of course, the sun broke through momentarily, and bathed the famous white skull cap in holy light just before the count-down. He won by several seconds, as you remember, obviously paying no attention whatever to the fog. All we could see was his apparently unhurried, almost leisurely-looking swish through the first gate; then the mist closed in behind his relaxed-looking broad back.

Stuart was angry about that. He himself will never be as big as Sailer, and he had built up quite a thing for Anderl Molterer, who is just his size. In fact, Stuart is a character—one of the local Vermont types, in frayed blue jeans (would rather be dead than found in ski pants), dirty knitted headband, goggles, and gloves (what, *mit-tens?* Horrors!).

He skis, of course, in that impossible way. That is, you never see the slightest daylight between his legs unless he comes upon a rock at high speed and decides the only way to avoid certain death is to straddle it quick and hope nobody notices.

So, on the following day, the first thing in the bright, sunlit morning, Stuart was sure he needed to give Molterer some advice. As I get it with-

in an hour or two of when the great downhill was to begin, he launched into a monologue while Molterer laced his boots. Stuart pointedly and with sign language made it clear he hoped, and in fact insisted, that Molterer beat Sailer good and proper at last. Stuart is positive the Austrian got the spirit of it, and says Molterer assured him it would be taken care of.

Later I was standing near Stuart when Sepp Ruschp jumped up on a bench and called for volunteers to sideslip the Nose Dive. (About four inches of lovely but dangerous new snow had fallen before daylight.) Stuart's hand shot up a good fraction of a second before anybody else's. After a moment, I put my hand about shoulder high. So, in spite of the chief steward's violent insistence, all morning long, that everybody had to stay off the course, Stuart and I "ran" it within an hour of race time.

The Seven Turns are steep, too. Each time I fell I made it obvious to the other sideslippers that I was just doing a particularly thorough job of smoothing out the trail for "my friend" Toni Sailer. I would fall gracefully, then stamp the snow with a frown, leaning on one hand, and get up again very purposefully.

Stuart, of course, was long gone. I understand that he paused at Shambles Corner until Sepp himself came down, Sepp having passed me way up at the last of the Seven Turns and given me up as a bad job. Sepp motioned Stuart to precede him.

The crew of sideslippers had left the trail without a mark, and Stuart found it irresistible. The crowd was getting thick. The maestro was right behind him, watching. He put in the poles and made a jumping plunge straight at it, found it very nice, so made sweeping high-speed parallel turns with some pseudo-necessary reverse shoulder and then, never having been on such a super-prepared surface, and finding it more and more to his liking by the second, he straightened the skis out toward the finish line and let 'em rip.

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Whoever was then warming up the public address system saw him coming, and muttered into the microphone, "Hooray, fastest time of the day!" The crowd laughed happily.

(I shudder still. What would we have done with Stuart if he had caught an edge and gone into an egg-beater, leaving a fine series of ineradicable gouges right in front of Sepp within a few minutes of the first of the lady racers, ending in a huge sitzmark, and coming up with a face full of snow to unkind laughter from the crowd? Would he ever have gotten over it?)

Meanwhile, by the time I came snowplowing into Shambles Corner, the officials there waved me madly off the course. I was beating the bushes to death with my skis, in the woods alongside, trying to traverse over to the lift line, when I heard that Mädi Springer-Miller had scored the fastest time up until then, and I realized that she might win (as, indeed, she did).

Stuart was waiting for me in a lather of impatience at the top of the lift. "Come on," he yelled, long before I could get my chair to whisk me up onto the snow in front of him. We ran up over the knoll and joined a group on the far side.

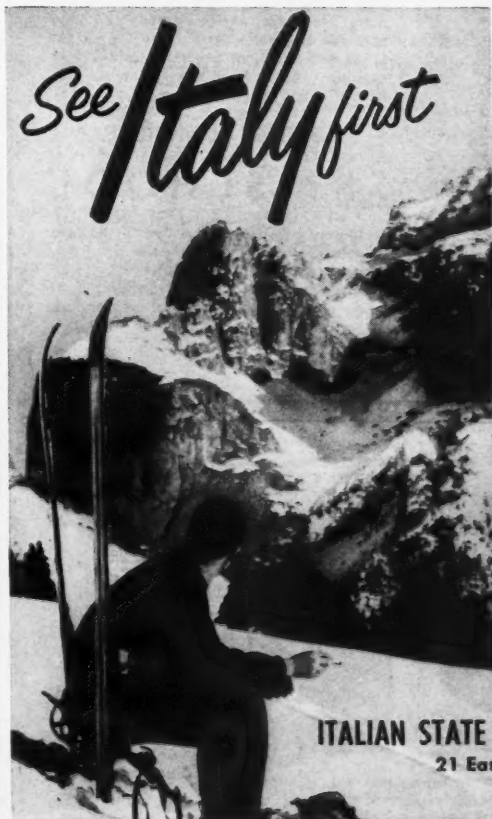
As we stood there, looking up the swath of the supper Nose Dive, Bob Bourdon and two Sun Valley patrolmen came down the course, Bourdon with the movie camera in both hands, and no poles. This was the first time I had ever seen skiers of their ability in such a horrifying place. I was immediately let down. I saw at once that if you are that good, you can ski even a narrow steep place with safety. They came down, making quick little heel-lifts left and right, which checked the speed nicely. Even so, Bourdon almost lost his balance when he was part way down, and leaned out dangerously on one ski for a breathtaking instant.

Then the forerunners came down, and although they came at greater speed, they still gave the impression of great caution. By that time I was prepared to admit that the place was just too, too dangerous, and that I was in for a major disappointment.

Then the distant loudspeaker at the summit announced Bruno Alberti, the first racer, and we watched him start from way up on the skyline. When I saw what he was doing, the most uncomfortable cold chill I have ever experienced started at the base of my spine, spread up my back and over



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the top of my skull. Alberti had put the skis tight together, his arms close to his sides, and was starting straight down that awful schuss. He built up fantastic speed instantly, speed that seemed ten times as fast as anything I had ever witnessed. It had no connection whatever with ordinary skiing, even by so-called "fast" skiers. The race is nearly two miles long, and was won in just under two minutes. So, if the average was nearly sixty miles an hour, he probably hit seventy on that first pitch.

I had been convinced all day that it would be impossible to make the sharp turn at Toll Road, below us, at any great speed. Yet Alberti, plunging straight down, then dipping almost out of sight for a second, swept into view again apparently moving even faster. Now we could see that he was pressed way forward in the racing crouch—the picture-book effect. Curving down across the lower schuss, he threw up spray like a motor boat, despite the fact that the snow was almost as hard as ice. The skis made an entirely new noise—a roaring sound. It obviously took every ounce of his strength to hold the edges into that impossibly long high-speed turn. He rushed at the bottom on the inside, slammed violently over the humpy snow there, skittered down and into the Seven Turns and was gone. I let out my breath.

Stuart was running down the slope toward our special vantage point in the Seven Turns. We plowed through deep snow past people still coming up. I wormed my way out into the very neck of woods on the inside of the second turn. Stuart stayed back a few feet. The place I stood was so steep that the snow around the base of a big tree on my left was up even with my head, and I could reach out and lean on that snow. To my right was the flag marking the near side of our turn; it was on a level with my feet even though it was on a tall bamboo pole only about six feet away. As I got settled, I realized that there was a mattress wrapped around the tree, and there was a spectator on the uphill side of the mattress, putting himself between the oncoming skier and the tree! I knew he was crazy. Meanwhile, several racers had gone by while we were struggling through the deep snow, including Werner, who lost to Sailer by only one-tenth of a second.

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skis above. It was Pravda, who is notorious for it. He screamed into view. I felt as if I was in a manhole in the middle of the Indianapolis Speedway, with my head sticking out. He was tearing straight at us.

I waiting a split second for him to swing away into the turn. But he didn't; he came right for us—a wild, nightmarish, terror-striking thing. At the last instant I recoiled in heart-lurching panic, sure that it was actually happening to me and that we would all be killed.

Pravda went by our corner so far on the inside that had I reached out my hand I would have killed him. I was actually protected by the tree. But that, my friends, is how close it can be done, at sixty miles per hour on two slats of wood with steel edges. My heart didn't settle down for a long time after that.

Sailer, however, elected the center of our turn. Looking back on it, I think he was a little more relaxed than some of the others, although he too was using utmost power to hold everything at that killing speed. We saw many men fall at the turn below us. On any other surface but snow they would have no skin left on the exposed places; and they would have few bones intact. Even on the snow we marveled that no one was hurt.

All racers wear a tortured expression in the downhill. It is a grimace of supreme muscular effort, an uncontrollable screwing-up of the face into a mask of strain, with bared fangs. The eyes, on the other hand, are wide behind the protecting goggles, searching the snow ahead desperately.

Stuart agrees with me that Igaya's face was somehow the most clearly visible as he roared past us. I am probably reading something into it, but I want to tell it my way, to pay him the supreme compliment. I have heard he had a really bad fall once, somewhere, and that he freely admits it has affected his nerve.

I feel positive that Igaya's expression showed much more than just muscular effort. To be there, to look into his face as he plunged past us, was painful . . . was heart-breaking . . . was uplifting and embarrassing.

Because his face showed too plainly that he was utterly terrified. Yet he was, of course, proceeding skillfully with the job at hand.

Stuart has had a few second thoughts about doing any downhill racing.



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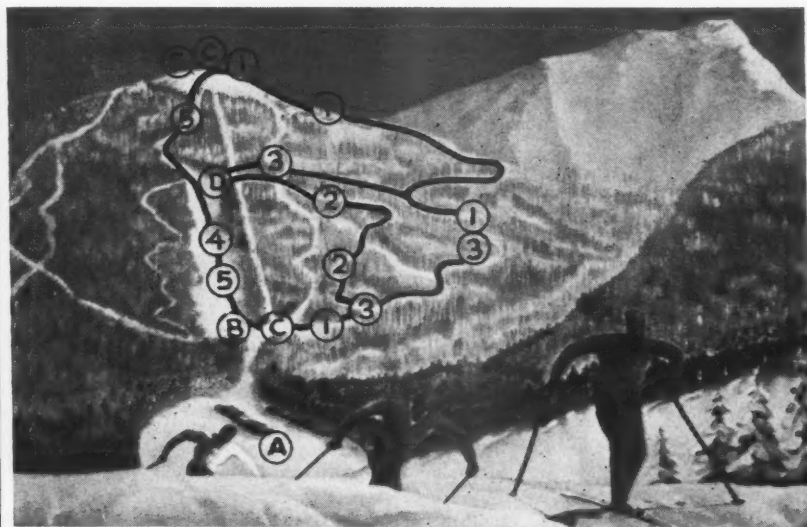
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# Revolution in Ski Teaching

## Wedeln Opens the Way to Innovations in Ski Instruction

**L**AST YEAR was the "Year of Wedeln," as George Earle points out in his article following this one. Owing to a series of articles in *SKI*, many ski buffs were eager to learn the new style before the season got under way, and by midwinter there were enough wedelers around to excite the envy of all. Naturally this had a great effect on the ski schools, which were forced to teach wedeln or else.

Then there was the problem not only of what to teach, but how to teach it. Since the official Austrian teaching manual had not been translated, its influence was not far-reaching, and was largely indirect. Joubert's pedagogical advice was also inaccessible. Ski instructors relied largely on the example of good skiers and, for teaching helps, on their own experience and ingenuity.

For some instructors, like Doug Pfeiffer of Snow Summit, Calif., the change was welcome confirmation of their tested methods of teaching. For others, like Bill Briggs, wedeln provided the needed excuse for large-scale testing of teaching gimmicks: Briggs, for example, at Sugarloaf, Me., last season worked out an extremely interesting method of teaching a "parallel stem" christie involving a preliminary uphill christie in place of the old-style stem. On the official and organizational level, the changes were less dramatic but nonetheless significant: the Canadian Ski Instructors' Alliance, for example, officially approved the uphill stem at its annual meeting this fall, in accord with the official Austrian method.

In the midst of all this ferment, hardly anybody noticed what was going on up at Jay Peak in northern Vermont. The resort industry's impression was: "They have a new Austrian instructor up there named Foeger—no, no relation to Luggi, he spells his Foegger with two g's—who's teach-

ing some screwball technique. Go up there any Sunday and you'll see him at the bottom of the practice hill, surrounded by a ring of pupils going through the darnedest series of movements. Take 'em off skis, and they'd look like a modern dance class."

True, Walter Foeger teaches army style, "by the numbers," and insists on exaggerating all the movements. But to more discerning critics, the demonstration was anything but laughable. And any Foeger pupil will tell you the results were more than gratifying.

Of all the newfangled teaching methods in this country, Walter Foeger's is probably the only one which is organized systematically down to the last detail (a description, now being translated, will shortly be available to professionally interested persons upon contacting Foeger). Outside of the official Austrian method, it is the only one of the professedly "direct" wedeln methods which has been used and modified through use over a period of five years or more. Foeger and his teaching system are in any case interesting as phenomena of the wedeln era and merit a closer look.

A Kitzbüheler, Walter Foeger was educated as a professional soldier, completing his training after the *Anschluss*. A less fortunate choice of career can hardly be imagined, under the ensuing circumstances; yet it permitted him, for a time at least, freely to indulge his love of sports, skiing in particular. As a racer he placed well in international competition, winding up as coach of the powerful Austro-German men's alpine team in 1940-41. No less than five members of this team were killed in the Russian campaign, two of them while serving with a unit of mountain troops under Foeger's command. Among survivors was Pepi Gabl, who is now coach of the U.S. women's alpine team in Europe.

After the war, Foeger turned to sport as a vocation. He was Fred Rössner's predecessor as *Sportwart* of the Austrian Ski Association, and for two years in this capacity laid the groundwork for the teams which in the 1950's have dominated international competition. Subsequently he spent several years in Spain as coach of the national team and organizer of the skiing part of the national sports program. When in Kitzbühel, Walter played on the first string of the hockey team. He also ranked among Austria's dozen top tennis players, and was a perennial semifinalist in the national championships.

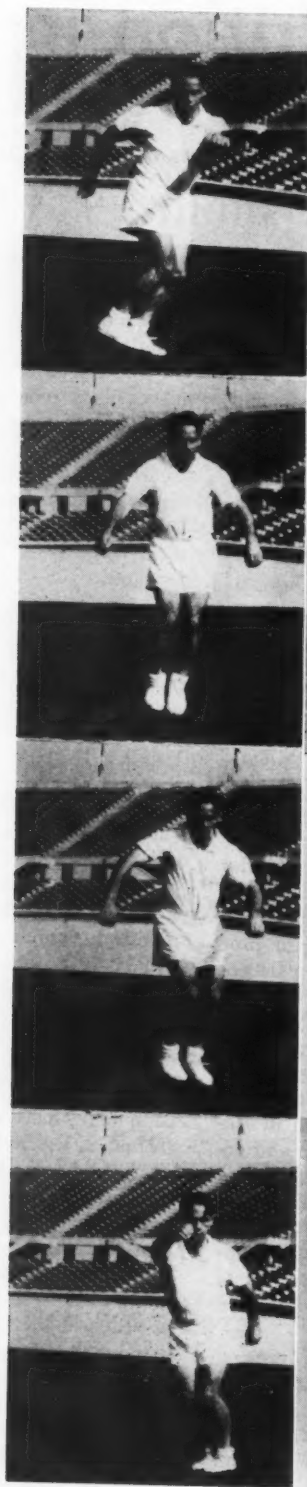
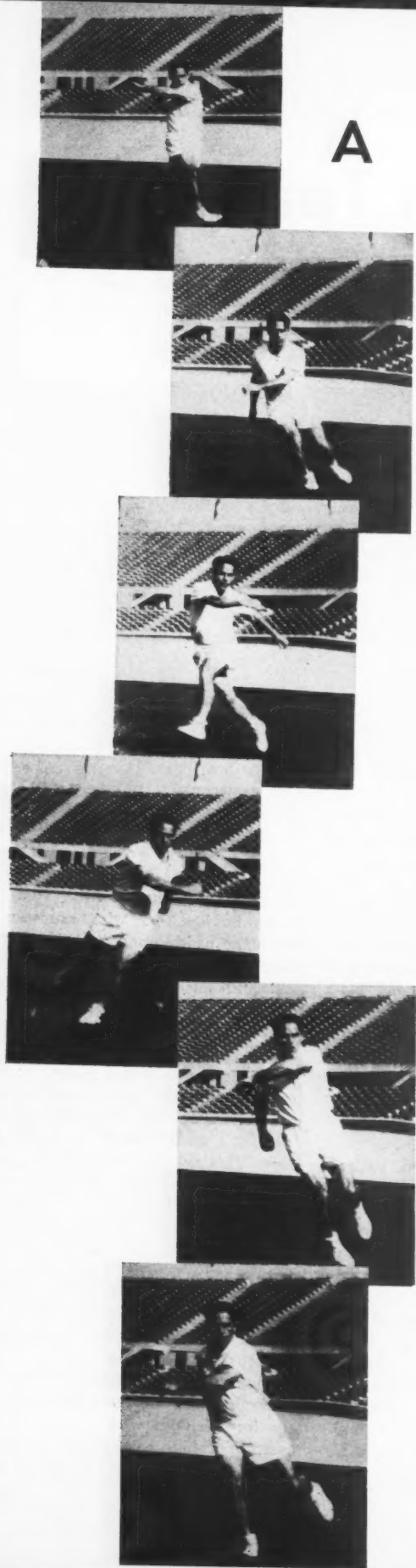
When Jay Peak, budding ski area at North Troy, Vt., began looking for a ski school head and technical advisor less than two years ago, it had little to offer a man of Foeger's qualifications. The intermediary was Rudi Mattesich, head of the Austrian Tourist Bureau in New York, who has a vacation home nearby, and a personal interest in the new area. He and other Austrian officials persuaded Walter that Jay Peak had the potential of a great ski area, and that he should help guide its destinies.

The new area was a proper challenge to call forth Foeger's varied abilities. A year ago the area consisted, in effect, of a small Pomalift and practice slope. This season a new lift section and several trails have been added—all planned and surveyed by Walter Foeger, who also took time for a ski trip to Chile this past summer. Yet it was not only his overall grasp of area operation that so impressed the directors and decided them to make him general manager of Jay. It was the fabulous success of his new teaching method which in a single season won many devotees and not a little notoriety for the otherwise obscure little area. "Wedeln in a week" sounds ridic-

*Text continued on page 32 ►*

A

B

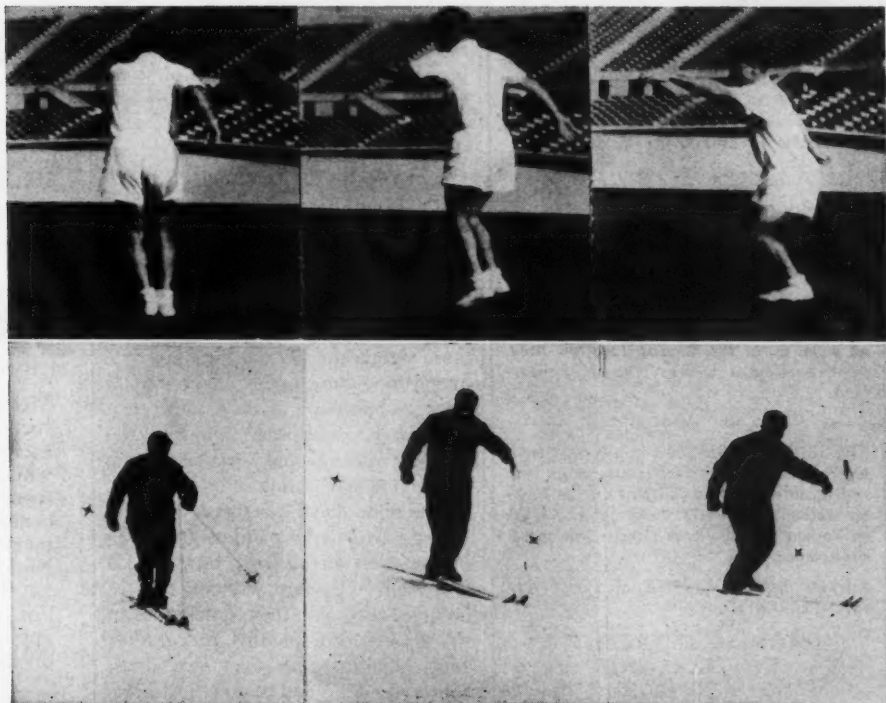


# Foeger's 'natural method'

- A** Springing from side to side and crossing legs while running, Foeger shows with exaggerated movements that right arm comes forward as left leg does—that "reverse" shoulder is normal, natural movement
- B** Good dry-land exercise is pivoting on toes, swinging heels to side as arms and shoulders rotate in opposite direction. Done on skis with lifting of the tails, this soon leads to worthwhile technical gain
- C** Foeger helps pupil learn turns by dividing them up into series of small hops, performed while tips of skis remain on snow. On skis, pupil may use ski pole as pivot point for half-circle turn

*Photos by MANOR STUDIOS*

**C**



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## REVOLUTION

Continued from page 29

ulous, but Foeger came closer than ski schools that actually made such a claim. In a week or less of instruction, he succeeded in teaching housewives, children and businessmen to make steady reverse-shoulder christies on a practice slope.

The first modern wedeler, according to Foeger, was an Austrian boy named Karl Seer, who flitted through slalom gates in the new style before World War II—much to the disapproval of his fellow racers, who all skied Arlberg. After the war, Foeger remembered Seer and began experimenting with his technique. When wedelers started mushrooming all over the Alps, he turned his thoughts to another problem: how could weekend skiers learn the new style?

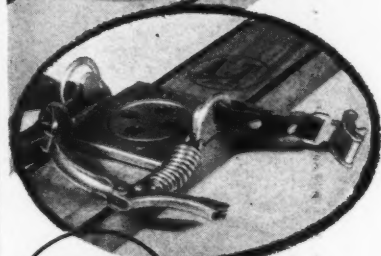
From his experience in hockey, tennis and other sports as well as skiing, Foeger had concluded that the new technique was more natural in its movements than the old, hence ought to be easier to teach. Also, since the new method was demonstrably a more efficient way to ski, was there any reason to teach anything else? If the pupil's goal was to ski the new way, could anything be more ridiculous than his learning an entirely different and opposite set of movements, only to unlearn them again?

It was in Spain, in the early 1950's, that Foeger had his first opportunity to try out his theories. One of his jobs was to instruct large groups of vacationing students, most of whom had never seen snow before. He divided them arbitrarily into two groups and taught one by the traditional Arlberg method and the other "guinea-pig" group by his new parallel method. The result of this experiment was immediately striking, since the latter group was far ahead of the other after a week. The long-term result was even more significant, since a high percentage of the "guinea pigs" became good skiers, while none of the others, even years later, could progress beyond the stem-christie-and-shaky-traverse style of intermediate skiing.

The children of a resort town learn skiing particularly painlessly: simply by imitation. Being light, they can ski fast from the start without fear of falling hard, and they quickly learn sideslipping and parallel turns. Most adult beginners, however, are afraid of speed—with good reason. The basic

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problem in ski teaching is to get beginners to turn without speed. Hence that old crutch, the snowplow or stem. The parallel teaching methods, with more or less success, have attempted to substitute sideslipping for the stem.

But sideslipping—which involves edge control—is not the easiest thing to teach a beginner, either. Seeking an additional crutch for the rank beginner, Foeger reasoned that an adaptation of the old *ruade* might provide the needed support. At the same time, by analogy to instructional methods in tennis or golf, he felt sure that pupils must be taught, at the start, the correct body positions they would one day assume as experts.

To summarize the elaborate program: pupils are taught "correct," actually somewhat exaggerated and formalized, body positions at the start; they learn to sideslip and turn via a series of little hops performed with ski tips on the snow; they master each graduated exercise before proceeding to the next; and each exercise is taught on a slope especially prepared or chosen as suitable for its rapid accomplishment. Pupils end up skiing in the new style, with basically the same movements they learned at the beginning—only much more relaxed, or even casual, we might say by way of protest against the mite-too-rigid posturings of Foeger's system.

Walter's theoretical interpretation of the new technique in its finished form lies somewhere between that of Kruckenhauser and Joubert. He rejects the Austrian's snowplowing approach, considering the snowplow suitable only for bushwacking, running narrow catwalks, etc. Contrariwise he rejects the Frenchman's "dynamic reverse" shoulder, considering counterswinging primarily as a check to the degree of turn, and *wedeln* therefore as a series of linked unfinished turns. Altogether his point of view most closely resembles that of the Swiss, Josef Dahinden, particularly in his insistence on natural athletic motion in skiing. Foeger insists that the weight be on one ski, not both, just as it is on one leg in running. A turn with lifted inside ski forms part of his teaching program.

If Foeger's is not The Way, at worst it is one of many new ways being found to teach skiing—from which a method may evolve that will make skiing as easy to learn as golf or tennis (apologies to golf and tennis enthusiasts, but it just isn't!).

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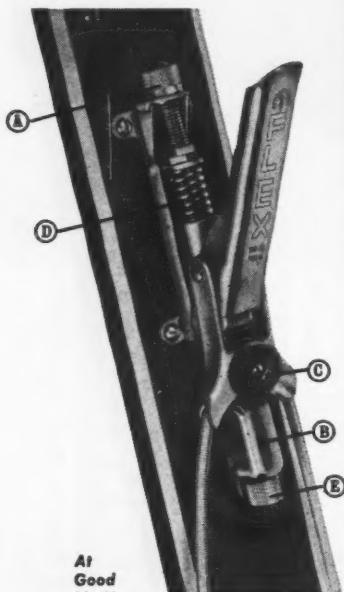


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by ELEANOR PRAGER

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Now, if you have been completely honest, you may be ready to admit that you possess a disposition that is distinctly contrary. If so, do not worry, you will find the reverse shoulder best adapted to bring out this *you* boldly, uninhibitedly. If your inner probing has revealed a calm phlegmatic nature, you are fortunate indeed, for the old-fashioned Arlberg technique, complete with lower stem and snow-plow, is admirably suited to emphasize this part of your character. Then again, if your need is to express a brisk, efficient, self-contained personality, by all means concentrate on the Swiss. If you tend to be a flamboyant extrovert, the French technique would definitely be it for you. And should your soul-searching find you unashamedly sexy, do not despair, the Canadian technique with its positive and negative wiggles will be of the utmost help in bringing through this facet of your personality. Oh, what enjoyment can be derived from skiing when done in this manner, opening up a completely new way of life!

Important, too, we cannot afford to overlook the many deviations from the accepted techniques which can also be utilized in expressing the real *you*. If you are soignée, sophisticated, perhaps slightly jaded and a bit bored, what could reflect the inner *you* better than a lovely slow mambo. Or if you happen to be the exact antithesis of this type, one of the lucky ones, youthful, carefree, exuberant, why, wedel to your heart's fulfillment and *your* personality will clearly shine through to all interested, as well as disinterested, spectators.



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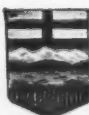
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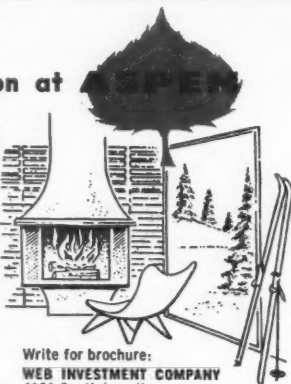
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## The Year of Wedeln

The new technique has made  
its mark on ski instruction

by GEORGE F. EARLE

Chairman, Certification Committee  
United States Eastern  
Amateur Ski Association

UMPIRES, even head umpires, aren't supposed to say much. Their monumental silence is designed to quell the wildest rages of emotion and maintain the ordered well-being of the sport. The "certification" committee that the writer heads has a similarly non-partisan umpire function. In administering the examination and status of the approximately 150 professional ski instructors "certified" to teach skiing in the east we of the committee must retain some objectivity and not get too involved in the emotions of the players.

However, the following letter was just received from an instructor who has been teaching at one of the biggest areas but is this year starting a school of his own. He says (in part): "Due to the present controversy about the so-called wedeln technique, I am a bit confused as to what sequence to adopt in my school." If some teachers are a bit confused, how about the students? And of course there have been letters from beginners in ski school, too. Such letters in general express the wish that all the instructors would get together and teach the same thing. They do get together, often.

However, no attempt is made by the instructors to regiment themselves to a system. In this country only in the military services has teaching been so standardized with even partial success. Educators say that first-quality teaching can never be standardized or systematized but must remain flexible enough to accommodate the individual personality of the teacher.

Be that as it may, it must have been disconcerting for the beginning skier last year to pay for and struggle through a lesson, only to pick up a magazine and read that he should have been going up when he was going down; that his shoulders should have been waiting, or even going the

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other way, instead of leading the skis into the new direction; that his hips can do all sorts of things. . . . Also, last winter could have been even more disconcerting for the instructor. One of them was asked if he taught "welding!"

It is fair to say, though, that neither the beginning skier nor the instructor takes the leading role in blowing up the present technique situation into a major controversy and a minor disruption in skiing's development. After all, the beginner takes on the student attitude of resigning himself to that hopeless hit-me-again mixture of drill and hazing. At the other extreme, the professional instructor enjoys a certain perspective and worldly experience that doesn't let him get too "shook up" at a mere change in the physical laws of the universe. A successful ski instructor is altogether too professional to be caught blinking back the tears, even if confronted with absolute proof that things are just the opposite of the way he's been saying they are in the past.

Concerning apparent contradictions with past teachings, a thoughtful teacher realizes that any field of learning is a circular whole; depending on where you choose to start with your teaching, you can always run into someone coming the other way. For example, history's province is the influence of the past on the present. So one teacher starts with the present and follows influences backward, and another moves from past to present. For as the past is revealed only in the present, the present is understood only through the past.

So with ski instruction: you can't ski without speed; you can't speed without control; but if you teach control are you teaching skiing? Or can you start with speed and work backward?

So with wedeln: there is no argument at all about the finished product—the end sought. There is not even any change here. Racers and accomplished skiers are not changing and have not changed styles (as the jumpers have, for instance). No, the excitement is completely concerned with the means to the end, the approach—where to enter the circle.

It is really what we may call the "middle-class skier" who is working wedeln up into a kind of sputnik visitation that threatens to cast an air of confusion and uncertainty across the ski-learning effort of this winter.

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958



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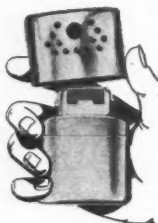




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(1957, the year of sputnik and wedeln!) But he is the most important skier of all. He represents skier numbers; more important, he best represents the therapeutic good that skiing as a vigorous outdoor winter activity can do our urban society.

But some of this big class of skiers by their enthusiasm become as infatuated with the systems and theories of skiing as others do with equipment, and still others with after-skiing refreshment. To them skiing techniques are dogmas subject to definite systematizing—flash cards, check cards, critique cards . . . do this and that will happen . . . push button instructions. This is skiing reduced to engineering.

But skiing is much more of an art than a science—certainly the teaching of it is. The shadings and nuances are infinitely complex and infinitely variable. At intervals some radically new technique proves that you can get the same results "easier and better" if you do the exact opposite of what you always believed you had to do. Heavy-handed analysis beyond a certain point is like certain thorough dissections of music: it would be better to listen than tear it apart.

The brisk upsurge of business in those ski schools first introducing the new method was certainly a mixed blessing. The most wedeln-enthused of instructors recognizes that beyond a certain point a general air of confusion in the public mind can more than offset the very desirable initial enthusiasm accompanying a valuable new approach. For the most part the ski schools were ready for the stampede—some enthusiastically, some defensively. But woe betide the ski school that didn't get its wedeln sign out soon enough!

There was a genuine difference of opinion behind a fairly united front of offering the new technique to the public. Many schools said: "For those who are ready." Some said: "Right from the beginning." Others said: "It's nothing new; we've been teaching it right along" (and then made certain changes as every good ski school does every year). A few said: "If they want to learn snow sculpture, we'll teach them!" One or two said: "Non-sense."

Actually what matters is not whether the student got wedeln or non-wedeln, or what kind, or what modification. What matters is how much of a glimpse of the complete circle of basic skiing ability each in-

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structor was able to give to each student. Does the student begin to identify himself with the skis, as does the bicycle rider with his bike, or is he merely a determined passenger sending messages to his skiing muscles "by the numbers?" Real harm is done when a good instructor is pressured into offering a teaching technique or a method he does not completely believe in, is not enthusiastic about. Real harm is also done when there is a question in the pupil's mind concerning the efficacy of what he is being taught.

But the opposite is also true and perhaps more to the point at present. A new idea, believed in, has the power of lifting both teacher and student to a level of stimulation that greatly implements the teaching process. Merely the fresh newness of wedeln injected a large measure of visible enthusiasm in the assembled instructors at last spring's rally on Mt. Mansfield—enthusiasm for teaching at season's end—enthusiasm that has carried strong into this year's largest-ever ski instruction year.

In conclusion, I think it can be seen that wedeln could do considerable harm, or at least create unpleasantness, if it were to be pushed by the skiing public into a technique war similar to the classic Empire French versus Arlberg battle of ten years ago, some wounds from which have still not healed. The good from each of the techniques persists as part of the teaching repertoire; the exaggerations fade away.

Fear not that wedeln will somehow pass you by. Don't feel that you must clutch for it, as for a good thing in the market, or forever look back with regret. Its value will soon be in even the most conservative school, smoothed down for conservative consumption.

Fear not that your past instruction is wasted. Not so in either the general or the particular. Wedeln does not deny rotation. It offers an opposite extreme and several stages in between; but we can only learn one stage at a time so it doesn't too much matter at which of several points we start.

The very best of new ideas are those that crystalize and define activity until then only vaguely felt and not clearly realized and relate this activity to activity already clearly realized. This wedeln does to a remarkable degree, and to me this is the strength of its success.

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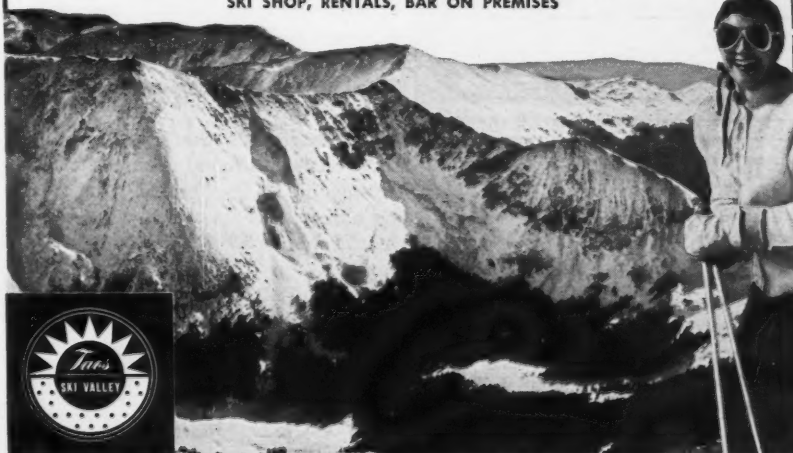
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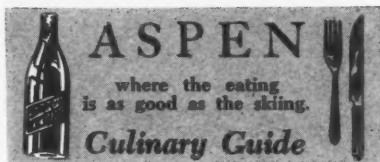
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## FAIRBANKS

(Continued from page 17)

country trails over which racers from the school and nearby military reservations compete almost every weekend. Two jumps, one right on the campus and the other a mile away, see regular use. The university also has an electric rope tow and slalom hill on campus for the use of the students.

But the place everybody goes to ski is Cleary Summit. The Cleary Summit Lodge, twenty-one miles north of Fairbanks on the Steese Highway, provides three miles of trails and open slopes for followers of the downhill sport. On days when the frost-filled air convinces even the much-heralded dog-team drivers of the wisdom of staying in bed, booted and parka-clad figures strap their boards to the car rack and sally forth to "the Summit." Bob McCann, operator of the lodge, embodies the general attitude in the ads he runs in the local paper. During really cold weather—the fifty-below variety—he advertises: "... ski at Cleary this weekend. It's twenty degrees warmer than downtown. Come out and warm up!"

While, like any enterprising young businessman, McCann sometimes tends to exaggerate, there is a great deal of truth in his sales pitch. The 2,200-foot difference in elevation between Fairbanks and his lodge often means a temperature variation of several degrees. There are many weekends when skiers fleeing the ice-fog-bound city find Cleary highlands "basking" in twenty-below zero sunshine.

Cleary Lodge itself epitomizes the devotion and enthusiasm of Alaskan skiers. This fall, while McCann was re-finishing the interior of the main building, a flash fire started that destroyed the whole structure. With the first snows of September already on the ground, the coming winter began to look pretty dismal for the McCann family and their clients.

That was when the skiers went to work. Weekends found volunteer crews showing up at the Summit with tools and a desire to help out. One week the charred framework was torn down and moved away; the next Saturday the basement went in; in quick succession the new framing, flooring and roof were put up. Before the snow was deep enough to distract the workers from their project, the new lodge was ready to go.

Although the traditional Alaskan custom of helping out a neighbor in  
*Continued on page 43* ►



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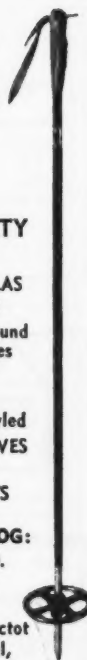
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trouble had quite a lot to do with the rebuilding of the lodge, the volunteer laborers were also aware of the fact that the only thing that allows them to ski in intense cold is the promise of a warm refuge close at hand.

No super-race, these people are merely outdoorsmen who have learned to live with the elements and to respect the cold. No one—not even a fanatical skier—can tolerate prolonged exposure to Arctic temperatures without, at least, extreme discomfort. That is why a lodge is a necessity.

Oddly enough, these cold-weather skiers don't dress a great deal different from their southern counterparts. The clothes most of them wear are the same as are seen on slopes all over the country—with the possible exception of a recent fad for hair seal ski pants.

For thirty-below skiing, the average man wears medium-weight woolen longjohns, wool gabardine ski pants, a light woolen shirt, a heavy sweater and, over them all, an ordinary pullover nylon parka. Two other necessities are a knit headband—known in the area as an "ear brassiere"—or hat with earflaps, and goggles. The last item is a must to prevent severe eye-watering.



Cold attacks the extremities first—in this case the hands, feet, ears and nose. These are the places which must be protected, and therefore merit the special equipment. Even at that, nothing is used which is strange to the "outsider."

Standard imported downhill boots are used, but more room is left for socks and circulation. Most people wear two pairs of woolen socks and, when lacing up, tend to give the toes room to wiggle around. Gloves impair circulation, so mittens are invariably worn. A popular combination which is effective in all but the coldest weather is a pair of leather chopper mittens worn over one pair or two pairs of woolen liners. To keep the always sensitive nose from icing up, a scarf is worn



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mask-like over the face. This serves another purpose, too—filtering the cold air before it reaches the lungs.

Once out on the trail, only a few precautions are required other than those normally attendant to safe downhill skiing. Extreme exertion, and the resulting dehydration which is often erroneously called "frosting the lungs," must be avoided. Another taboo is the temptation to adjust a balky binding with the bare hand. More than one unhappy "cheechako" has been handicapped for weeks with a case of frost-burned fingertips.

But, more than anything else, the Arctic skier must learn the right time to seek shelter. As strange as it sounds, most casualties stem from overconfidence rather than inexperience. All too often some zealous soul ignores a numb finger or ear until the intermediate stages of frostbite send him hobbling back to the lodge for a painful period of thawing out.

Few more awesome sights are seen around a lodge than that of a person who has been skiing hard for any period of time in the Arctic air. With frost-encrusted eyebrows, a white-tipped nose which refuses to stop running, and a jacket-front glazed with frozen breath, this foot-stamping apparition would be forwarded on to an aid station if it appeared anywhere other than within schussing distance of the Arctic Circle. Instead, room is made by the fire for another pair of stiffened toes, and a steaming cup of coffee is put to work thawing out the near-frozen nose. After a while, it rises as a normal human being and goes out once more to battle the elements.

All this isn't as perilous as it sounds. After learning just how much he is able to do in subzero air, it is amazing how well the average person adapts to the conditions. One University of Alaska freshman, accustomed to the comparatively balmy atmosphere of his native Colorado, spent his first day at Cleary glued to a lodge couch, extolling the virtues of sunny Aspen. He didn't believe people could survive, let alone ski, out in "that tow-equipped refrigerator." It was only a paltry minus eighteen at the time. When the coach of the university team told him he'd have to do more than talk about the good old days if he wanted to make the squad, the youngster finally ventured out—still mumbling about "masochism." By the end of the afternoon, he was shedding clothes with the toughest of the old-timers.

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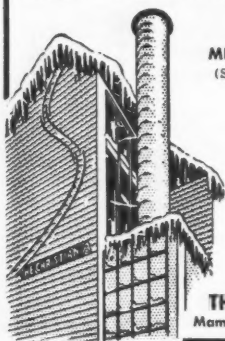
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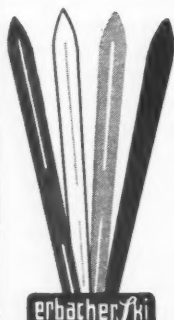
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38 Maple Ave., Swampscott, Mass.

The folks around Fairbanks are justifiably proud of their ability to ski under seemingly impossible conditions. The Cleary Summit Ski Club—probably one of the most enthusiastic skiing organizations in existence anywhere—long ago decided that such devotion warranted some special form of recognition. The result was a set of arm brassards which the club bestows on each of its members who completes a rather unique course of qualification.

Each new member sews a club emblem on his jacket—an unusual design in itself. Then, when the mercury drops to twenty below and the neophyte still sticks to his skiing, he is awarded a small patch marking that accomplishment. And if he's still around when it gets down to thirty below, he adds another patch which announces that feat. The sum of all three adds up to a man who likes his skiing. There is serious talk of adding a fourth award. You guessed it—forty below!

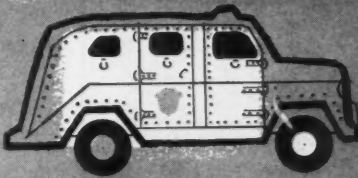
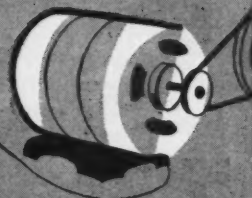
Another surprise to "outsiders" is the increasing popularity of racing in the north country. While cross-country competition was being conducted as early as 1900, downhill racing has had a shorter history. In the past few years, great steps have been taken in the interior with the formation of a regular racing committee and the attendant standardization of rules. Teams from the many military installations in the territory, the civilian clubs, and the University of Alaska compete almost weekly during the spring months.

To keep up with the growth of the sport, Bob McCann has been steadily improving his development at Cleary Summit. Last season he installed a new 1,800-foot rope tow which opened up a whole new area for his customers' use. Last summer he acquired his own "cat" and was able to make great progress in clearing the slopes. Although the loss of his original lodge has set him back somewhat, Bob plans to continue expanding until—and he crosses his fingers when he says this—"we think we can make a T-bar pay for itself."

With a northern slope location that catches and holds skiing snow from the end of October until early in May, and a swelling Fairbanks population hungry for recreation during the long winter months, this seems to be an eventuality rather than a dream. The only thing that could stop him would be the weather—and it's never too cold to ski!

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

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Modern Polish racer exhibits latest ►  
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## Skiing is a Popular Sport in Poland

A Polish sportswriter reports on  
skiing in the Tatra Mountains

by ZBIGNIEW MIKOLAJCZAK

ZAKOPANE, site of the last pre-war world alpine championships, remains the ski capital of Poland. During the winter season the hotels, resort lodges and ski dorms are crowded with sports-loving Poles. During the day they may tour in the rugged Tatra Mountains or ski the famous FIS I and II trails and other runs including a new slalom slope with tow. After skiing they enjoy the brew popularly labeled "mountain tea," which is half strong tea and half ninety-eight-proof alcohol. All except the hard-training competitive skiers, who have made a good showing in international competition of late.

Zakopane is not the only resort in Poland, of course. There is the well-known spa Krynica, and Szczyrk and Wisla in the Beskid Mountains, noted for their beautiful scenery, and Szklarska Poreba and Karpacz in the Karkonosze Mountains.

In 1957 was celebrated the fiftieth



Rudolf Rominger, former world ski champion

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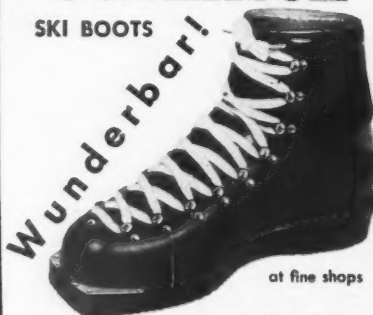
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Horse-drawn sleighs contrast with ▲  
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SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958



anniversary of organized skiing in Poland. For it was in 1907 that the Carpathian and Tatra ski associations were established. During this 1957 jubilee year of Polish skiing, Zakopane was the site of the Czech Memorial international skiing competitions.

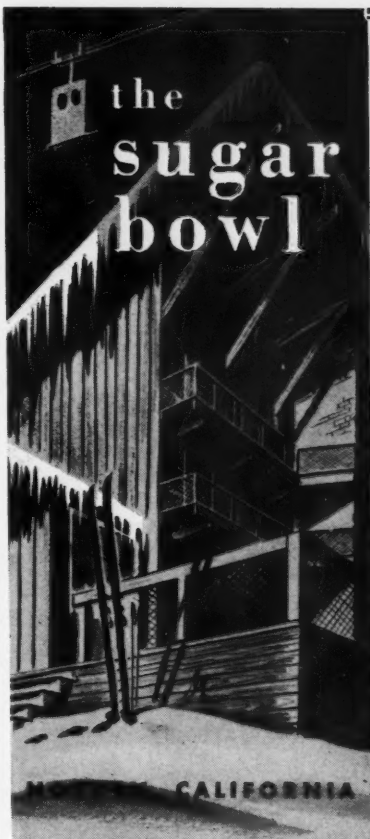
The first man to ski in Poland in modern times was Stanislaw Barabasz, who in 1880 designed and made his own skis. He began this contagion, building up such a large following that in 1894 he led the first ski tour into the Tatra Mountains. In 1898 the first Polish handbook on ski instruction was published in Cracow. (It was the fourteenth "how to ski" book published in the world.) Today there are 180 ski clubs in the country.

Skiing in Poland originated in the classic nordic events in which her champions have been most successful. Such skiers as Bronislaw Czech, holder of the unofficial world downhill speed record in 1928, and Stanislaw Maruszarz, who contended in every major skiing competition from 1932 to 1956, set the pace for the younger competitors of today.

Among those who deserve present recognition are: Franciszek Gron-Gasienica, winner of a bronze medal at Cortina; Tadeusz Kwapien, who beat all middle-European opponents in the FIS Ski Week at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1957; Maria Kowalska, who won the special slalom at Grindewald a year ago last month.

Keep your eye on the Polish FIS team this year. Although her skiing history dates well before the turn of the century, Poland is really just beginning to make a name for herself as a skiing nation.

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958



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# 'Snowshoe' Fran of Soda Springs

A gal who runs a ski lodge

by JIM SCOTT

**F**RAN COUILLARD is one gal who manages a ski resort all by herself. Her charge is the Donner Summit Lodge, a center of ski activity near Soda Springs, Calif.

She has the equipment for the job: five feet, eleven inches, slender and supple, she can do any task as adroitly as a man. Her long-fingered hands move rapidly, like a boxer's—whether pounding a typewriter or putting on car chains for some lesser woman caught in a snowstorm.

Even more impressively, she has made a profit for the owner—a feat her male predecessors failed to accomplish. The size of the lodge keeps her constantly busy. Supplemented by three large cabins, it can accommodate 127 guests. In summer Fran works from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. and in the winter she often puts in an eighteen-hour day.

When Fran finds time for sleep, she sprawls out on the floor of her room. "There's nothing more comfortable than a hard floor to relax on," she says, thumping on the wood for emphasis. "It puts me to sleep immediately." On her doctor's advice, Fran gave up soft mattresses for solid comfort after she injured her back in a bus accident seven years ago.

Before her accident Fran skied throughout the high reaches of the Sierras. The crash damaged one leg so that now she uses snowshoes instead of skis. In 1951 she proved her mettle as a veritable feminine "Snowshoe" Thompson.

This was the year when the "City of San Francisco" train was trapped in the Donner Pass, about nine miles from her lodge. Fran was one of the first to reach the stranded train—on snowshoes. Like "Snowshoe" nearly a century before, she carried medicine and supplies on her back. After reassuring the passengers that help was on the way, she began to photograph the scene that was making headline news across the country. Her films were carried by dog team, then by car to Reno where they were flashed around the world by the Associated Press.

Once while being interviewed on a radio hook-up near the isolated train, Fran almost became a headline herself—bordered in black. The interview took place in a nearby cabin. Suddenly the walls began to crumble. "Good gosh," she yelled into the microphone, "the place is coming down." As a result Fran received 375 letters from all over the world, asking if she had escaped the crash. She had.

Fran has never lost her interest in skiing. Lately she has been working on the revival of the Donner Trail Memorial Ski Race, which is a cross-country twenty-six miles in length. The country's longest race, it runs from Summit to Emigrant Gap over the Donner Trail. She has been assigned to mark the exact route the skiers will follow.

Anything that has to do with the history of California, especially the Sierras and Donner Pass, fascinates Fran. Last summer she was able to follow part of the laying of the Southern Pacific oil pipeline from Richmond, Calif., to Fallon, Nev., which runs through Donner Pass. Many of the workers stayed at her lodge. Whenever she could, she went with them to make certain they were following the precise route once taken by the ill-fated Donner party.

She has a lot of youngsters working for her. They come and go on a moment's notice. She remarked, "They don't have much to do here. I guess what I need is a bunch of authors. They seem to appreciate the isolation more than other people." Fran should know. She's a bit of an author herself. She used the solitude to put together a 70,000-word book of verse in 1954 on the early history of California.

Fran's own history reveals that she first lost her heart to the high Sierra country over twenty years ago. She was moved by the wild flowers, tall firs and pines, exhilarating air, the change of season, skiing—so much that she vowed she would someday return to live in these mountains.

Fran worked at many jobs before she could fulfil this vow. In San Francisco she was employed by an advertising agency as a model, secretary, publicist and account executive. Next she served as a designer and press agent. In 1942 she took a month's leave from this company—and never returned. That year she gained her first experience in hotel management at the Donner Summit Lodge, where she remained until 1946.

Fran and her husband, Art, oper-

ated a grocery store in Soda Springs. Fran happened to be away when a disastrous fire in 1951 completely destroyed the store and their apartment and took the lives of their dogs. Art was severely burned while fighting the holocaust and was hospitalized.

After his recovery Art took over the post office located in the Soda Springs Hotel. Fran joined him early in 1954. She was so efficient at this job, she was offered the assistant managership of the Donner Summit Lodge. The following year she became manager.

Fifteen employees are under her guidance. Her assistant manager is an old friend, Peggy Travis. Fran's mother is also a member of the hotel staff. The mountain people there know Fran as a warm-hearted taskmaster. Brusque on the exterior and given to salty language, she is respected for the help she gives—particularly to those in distress.

Her duties as manager are varied. She tells of a task that raised blisters on her hands: "I thought I only had to supervise the installation of sewage repairs, but first I had to find 700 feet of pipe which had been installed twenty-five years before—and no one knew where. I finally dug them up. You have to do things like this if you want to be in the resort business."

Neither man nor beast frightens Fran. Unruly guests are quickly expelled by her searing volley of words. One snowy night while shoveling the back walk, she encountered a bear with his head in a garbage pail. Fran handled him as she would any intruder: she whacked him across the rump with her shovel. He wisely skiddooed. The next day she became depressed when she heard the animal had been killed.

Now fifty-four, Fran is still increasing and accelerating all her activities. Although a fast typist, she now uses a tape recorder to save time. A cigarette usually burns from her fingers as she races about her ski lodge in pursuit of some new endeavor.

When the first blizzards of winter slash across the Summit, Fran will jump into her Jeep station wagon and prowl the Donner Pass area in search of stranded motorists. Once she was asked if she credited the outdoor life for her fine complexion. "Gosh no," Fran replied. "This mountain air dehydrates your skin. I use up a four-dollar tube of cold cream each month."

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

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## Norway Has So Much to Offer

by FRANK ELKINS

WITH A climate which provides skiing for little short of half the year and with terrain that offers skiing in all its varieties, it surprised us on our previous visit in 1948 that Norway didn't attract far more skiers than had been the case.

We learned then that the enthusiast who decided to come to Norway had to face the sea-trip across the North Sea with an even chance of forty-eight hours spent writhing in his cabin. Besides, the Alpine nations, with their summer tourist traffic already well established, had made a good start on their winter resorts, and here, in company with other novices, the beginner felt a little more at home than he might in Norway, where the native population was almost literally "born on skis."

Things are now changing rapidly, for Oslo is only four hours removed from London and some fifteen to eighteen from New York. In addition, Norway has increased her winter sports hotels and today it has close to eighty top-grade hotels, which offer every service and amenity which even the most exacting visitor may demand. In addition, there are countless other hotels and pensions, huts and cabins, capable of accommodating an army of skiers.

This development has been dictated not least by domestic demands, for in course of time Easter has become the great national holiday when every Norwegian, released for one glorious week and a half from the drudgery of office stool and factory bench, hies himself to the mountains for the annual dose of sun and snow. These mass exoduses from towns, coupled with the invasions from Denmark and Sweden, have in course of time, made Norway hotel-conscious and tourist-conscious to a degree that a chance visitor of twenty-five years ago would hardly credit.

There are more than twenty lifts and tows available in Norway, but the American will delight in the terrain and variety of skiing combined with the hospitality of the Scandinavians, who make the visitor very much at home and welcomed. Instead of the congestion of the continent, the visitor will discover lots of open country, wonderful "plateaus" and "plains" for a type of skiing so sadly missed and

neglected in North America, that of touring. But there are ski lifts at Tryvannskleiva, just outside of the capital (the only European capital which is a winter resorts center in its own right), and at Lillehammer, Norefjell, Geilo, Voss and Oppdal. More are being planned.

The visitor, accustomed to congested tow and lift slopes in America, soon joins his Norwegian colleagues for what is considered their favorite sport and soon his, too, of touring or hiking on skis. With rucksack on back, he sets off for a day's skiing, using map and compass to find his way. The chain of comfortable tourist huts provide an excellent overnight stay and the whole winter landscape is one's playground. The skier may vary his route to embrace every type of skiing, from the exhilarating traverse in powder snow down the slope of a great glacier, or a run through the dazzling fairyland of a great pine forest, with each tree under its heavy mantle of snow standing sentinel, like some brooding troll of fantastic mien. This is, indeed, the people's sport which brings health and happiness every year to countless thousands of Norwegians and tourists.

The more adventurous, wanting to make a clean break with civilization, spurn the shelter of the tourist huts. They prefer to spend the night in the snug warmth of a sleeping bag, in a tent or igloo of their own construction. Dog teams have become increasingly popular, and they enable greater quantities of food and equipment to be taken on an expedition.

For the comparatively inexpert skier an extended tour from hut to hut is probably the most suitable form of sport. One may adapt mileage and terrain to suit one's ability. One will find this far more amusing than a week hanging sheepishly around the nursery slopes, hoping not to be quite such a fool as one's fellow novice, who has just taken a header after crossing his skis.

Apart from the coastal districts of the west and south, where winter sometimes comes and goes with little snow, literally the whole of Norway offers skiing. In Oslo, at Nordmarka, skiing starts early in December, and usually lasts until the beginning of April; in the great mountainous dis-

trict of east and central Norway, the Jotunheimen Mountains or the higher parts of Gudbrandsdalen, snow falls regularly in November and lasts through Easter.

Typical Norwegian terrain is said to be the undulating forest country as found in Nordmarka, but this is to forget the vast Hardanger Plateau, with its glacial fields and escarpments, the entire range of the Jotunheimen Mountains, the Rondane Mountains, the Sunnmore "Alps" and a score of others. There is, in fact, no such thing as "typical Norwegian terrain," for the whole country offers every type from the forest trail to the plateau and the exhilarating peak or glacial field.

All hotels have ski instructors authorized by the Norwegian Ski School. These instructors, too, will arrange for the visiting skiers to take the various Norwegian ski tests, which entitle the successful candidate to wear the colorful Norwegian ski badge, first, second, and third class.

Railroad and bus facilities are ample in Norway and rates extremely reasonable at the first- and second-class tourist hotels and the third-class boarding houses, pensions and tourist huts. Costs range from \$4.00 to \$6.00 per day, including food and board,

at the best hotels, while three dollars will get you a room and food at the third-class pensions. A ten per cent service charge takes care of tips, etc.

Too much credit cannot be given to *Foreningen Til Ski-Idrettens Fremme* (Society for the Furtherance of Skiing), founded in 1883, for its wonderful work toward the vast organization of skiing in Norway. Consisting of close to 50,000 members of all ages, the Ski-Foreningen is the most popular of all recreational bodies in Norway.

It has many important duties, such as preparing and maintaining trails, cutting new trails, supplying free equipment to children, maintaining overnight touring huts, and sponsoring the world-famous ski museum at Frognerseteren. Other jobs performed by this tireless and tradition-steeped body include organizing eastern spring ski tours to the mountains for school children for a ten-day vacation period, giving free instructions to school children in Oslo park, running ski busses for boys and girls to Nordmarka, and conducting the greatest competitions of their kind—the Holmenkollen, which belongs to Norway like Derby Day to England, the Grand Prix to Paris and the World Series to the United States.



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# FOCUS ON SKIING

by W. JOHN UPJOHN



**S**HOOTING ski-movies is fun, but projecting un-edited film is unadulterated boredom—for your friends. Editing lends the spit and polish which makes a series of unrelated shots of varying quality into a finished, entertaining, story telling production. But editing is tedious, so save hours of agonizing over an editing machine and do your basic chopping in the movie camera. Do it first by planning your movie, second by eliminating the obviously bad material, and third by getting *all* the material you will need.

Simplest method of cutting time spent editing is to avoid basic errors, particularly the errors in focus, exposure and steadiness.

Focus is easy. Because you will be shooting snow in bright sunlight most of the time, you'll be using f-stops of 8, 11 and even 16. Properly used, your camera becomes a universal focus affair as easy to use as the old black Brownie.

Exposure is less simple. Meters give averages but you'll be shooting specifics, so read your meter against the object you want to capture on film.

Don't read the exposure for the sun-lighted, snow-covered slope and expect it to be correct for a closeup of the skier. Use a gray card (your dealer has them), or wear a ski sweater with the same reflective value as a standard gray card.

Rocky films can be real eyeball-poppers; they're the most common fault in most home movies. They're also the most easily corrected fault. Wobbles ruin films, and the longer lens you use the harder it will be to keep your camera steady. A sturdy tripod equipped with baskets appropriated from ski poles will do the trick, but tripods are bulky. Skipod—made specifically for ski-photographers—makes your ski pole into a one-legged tripod and adds neither weight nor bulk to your ski gear. If you don't have either Skipod or a tripod, shoot with your legs wide apart, or lean against a tree and hold your breath. Steadiness alone will improve your pictures.

These are the technical improvements, but the real trick is the story-telling. Editing requires the ruthless



BILL METZGER

*"Our salesmen have all gone to lunch, but I know all about those tobogganing sticks."*

scrapping of film, so make your shooting pay. Get the shots you'll need, the shots outlined in the last issue of SKI plus the shots which answer these questions:

How did you get to the ski slopes? Who went with you? What did the ski area look like? Was it fun (close-ups of faces show pleasure)? Was there excitement (follow a skier as we suggested last month)? What does a ski pro look like with the throttle down?

A solid approach to a ski film is to present a series of incidents: ski class, the lodge and the area, the excitement and beauty of skiing. Keep this in mind: how will it look on the screen?

Tip: steep slopes are hard to record in the two-dimensional camera. Correct this by shooting crosswise to the fall line. Use a relatively long lens to increase depth (conversely, a wide-angle lens will flatten a ski slope faster than a bulldozer).

Check your timing and change the pace of your film. You can't stretch film footage so make your scenes long enough—but not all the same length. Get some quick vignette shots to establish mood, some long shots of the excellent skiers. Change pace by timing—also by movement. Either change positions or change lenses for your various sequences. Establish your location by showing the subject in relation to his surroundings. Then, move up to show what he is doing. Get short detail shots. Above all, get humor into the camera so your film will record the light moments of skiing—the sport is for fun!

Don't bother posing your friends. Unposed pictures usually work better when you assemble films. Do get a picture of the lodge sign; it's a good potential title. Do get pictures of people coming up on the tow. Do change shooting positions so you won't have yards of footage showing black specks (skiers) on a white background.

In the upcoming issue of SKI, we'll talk about bench editing and titling. It's the editing job which converts a mass of unrelated pictures into a movie which is worth showing (and don't show it until it is edited), so shoot with your story in mind, film on sunny days, avoid too many pictures of your friends, show lots of details, and keep our camera with you for the unexpected shot.

Oh yes—don't forget to ski.

# HUMANIC *is top!*

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SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

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Unique Alpine Lounge, Set-Up Bar, Recreation  
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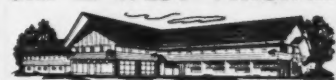
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SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

# The Mt. Snow Snowball

The story of a man and his multi-million ski area

by DAVID T. PECK

IN ALL ski-conscious America it is doubtful if anyone is more devoted to the cause of making the sport available to the masses than Walt Schoenknecht, developer of Mt. Snow in Vermont. If Schoenknecht's carefully laid plans work out—and in the past four years he has been advancing them at a startling rate—Mt. Snow will someday be able to accommodate more skiers than any resort in the world.

Last season, despite the fact that spring thaws came early, his area provided over 2,000,000 chair lift rides, largest annual total since it opened in the fall of 1954. With four double chair lifts and miles of trails for novice, intermediate and expert skiers, Mt. Snow was already among the biggest areas in the country.

As soon as the snow had melted, crews started clearing four new trails and installing a new chair lift. Schoenknecht is depressed by prolonged rainy spells during the spring and summer months, for he sets an ambitious schedule of work to be completed each year, so the area can be expanded as quickly as possible.

His ten-year program calls for five distinct sections at Mt. Snow to be serviced by fourteen chair lifts. To the south of the central section he has developed a huge "sun bowl" for Alpine-type skiing. Another section to the north will have trails challenging advanced skiers with pitches of twenty-six to thirty-four degrees and an open area a mile long and a half-mile wide. Schoenknecht has visions of accommodating as many as 20,000 skiers at a time before he is through.

A native of East Haven, Conn., where he started his enthusiasm for skiing as a schoolboy slaloming on the local golf course, Schoenknecht spent over ten years surveying the entire United States to find the ideal location for his ski area. Mt. Snow, formerly known as Mt. Pisgah, is in the little town of West Dover near Wilmington, Vt. Midway between Bennington and Brattleboro on the Molly Stark Trail, it is only 127 miles from Boston and 190 from New York. The main range of the Green Mountains to the west acts as a natural snow fence,

spilling snow in unusual amounts on the eastern slopes.

Walt was able to purchase several large tracts of farm and wood lands and he made arrangements with the National Forest Service to continue the area to the summit, since the top part of the mountain is in the Green Mountain National Forest. The farmhouse and part of the land he purchased were formerly owned by Reuben Snow, so the name Mt. Snow was a natural.

The main lodge at the area will eventually measure 350 feet in length. It features a twenty-two-foot fireplace open on three sides to warm skiers visiting the snack bars; vast window areas overlooking the ski slopes; a glass wall partition with goldfish swimming around inside.

Atop the 3,605-foot peak reached by riding two chair lifts is a three-story restaurant and lounge where visitors can rest before skiing to the bottom. Schoenknecht plans to add a V-shaped sun deck to the main lodge. Enclosed by twenty-four-foot high glass walls, it will have radiant-heated floors and a sixty-foot swimming pool heated for year-round use. He hopes to erect a five-story tower which will have lounges, fireplaces and game rooms to interest non-skiers or folks who have had their fill of snow.

This will all cost money, of course. The Mt. Snow Corporation, with Schoenknecht as president, plans to spend at least \$6,000,000 on the project before the area is completed. The cost of building lifts and putting restaurants up on top of mountains is fantastic, but Walt believes he can convince investors that the demand for skiing facilities has only begun to be met.

The project has been financed through the sale of stock and by bank loans. Purchasers of shares in the corporation are given lifetime skiing rights at Mt. Snow. They do not expect immediate dividends, as profits are being used for expansion.

Skiing has been a full-time career for Walt Schoenknecht since he was discharged following World War II



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service in the Marine Corps. He had been an avid ski enthusiast for many years before the war, visiting most of the major slopes in the country. Even when he was stationed near Washington, D.C., he headed north with his skis every time he could wrangle a few hours leave.

Naturally he picked as a wife a girl who was nearly as keen about the sport as himself—Margaret Moss, a former Army nurse who learned to ski in Japan where she lived with her family for several years.

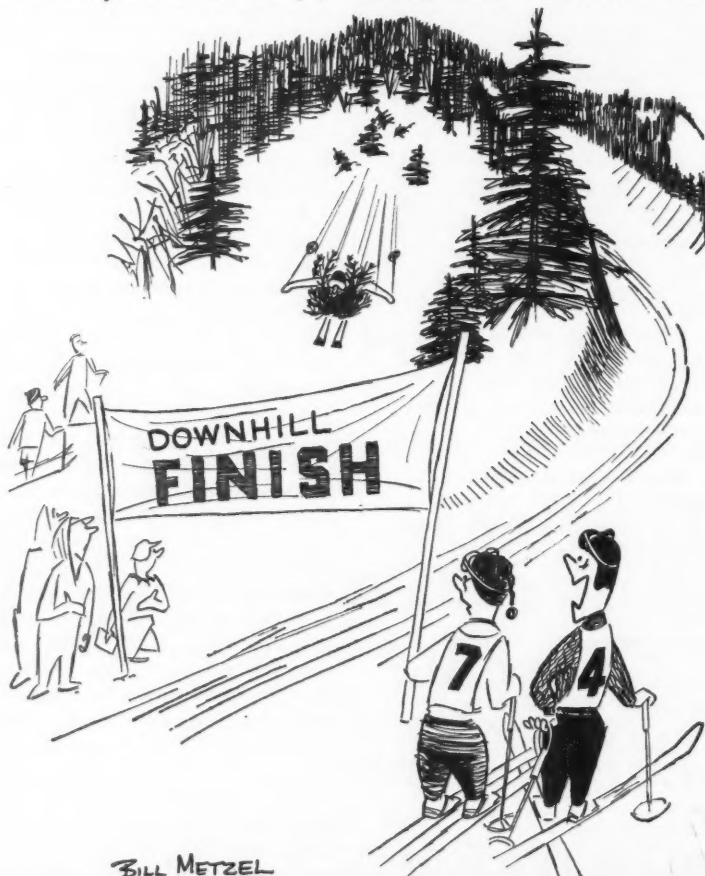
Walt and Peg got into the business in 1947 when they leased operating rights at Brodie Mountain near Pittsfield, Mass., in the Berkshires. This area had only three rope tows and accommodations were rustic, but they learned a lot about skiers and how to meet their needs.

By the time another winter made its appearance, the Schoenkechts were established at Mohawk Mountain in northwestern Connecticut, the site of a former CCC camp. Mohawk is part of a state park and in order to run a ski area there Walt had to sell the late Gov. James L. McConaughy

and members of the State Park and Forest Commission on the unique idea that he would spend his money to develop an area leased from the state.

The Schoenkechts have operated the Mohawk area for nine seasons. It's less than three hours from New York by car and, when conditions are right, it attracts vast crowds. Skiers don't drive any farther than they have to; they'd rather ski. Rocks and stumps have been removed from the trails and grass planted, so that skiing is possible after a relatively light snow. Mohawk can easily handle several thousand skiers, and Schoenkecht believes it is the biggest rope tow area in the world.

With Walt now deeply involved in operations at Mt. Snow, it falls upon Peg to get things organized at Mohawk on weekends when there is enough snow. An efficient woman who takes everything in stride, she drives from her home in New Haven, usually accompanied by ten-year-old daughter Carol, on a Friday afternoon, and calmly arranges for a large staff of nearby residents to be on hand to sell



BILL METZEL

"Man, that Carson really can pick a line."

tickets and feed the influx of skiers who descend upon the place Saturday and Sunday.

Just a few good weekends are enough to make Mohawk pay for itself, but winter is fickle in Connecticut and this haphazard operation wasn't enough to satisfy Walt's overwhelming desire to bring skiing to the American public in a big way. He continued his search for "the best location in the entire country" until he finally found what he wanted in southern Vermont.

Now at his Mt. Snow area, he can expand to his heart's content. He talks skiing the year round. Even on vacations to Florida and the Bahamas or on motor trips across the country, he spends most of his time talking to people in the resort business or any other activity which might have application to his own field. During the fall and winter months, he travels thousands of miles by car, train and plane, talking before skiing groups in the east and midwest, building up more enthusiasm for the sport.

"Way before the war," Schoen-knecht says, "I became convinced that a tremendous boom was due for skiing in this country. It's a sport for all ages. Women like it as well as men. It's something the whole family can do together and it's not really expensive when you consider what Americans spend for recreation today."

Getting people to the top of a hill quickly and in large numbers is one of the biggest problems in operation of a ski area. Americans traditionally hate to wait in line. Walt personally designed the monorail double chair trams which carry up to 1,300 skiers an hour at Mt. Snow. The area has given over 35,000 rides in a single day with waiting held to a minimum.

Walt regards lifts as a human conveyor system and says he got many of his ideas on the subject while working at an airplane plant in the early forties. He has also visited automobile factories in Detroit to study their conveyor systems.

Harried as he is with countless details to check on during a crowded weekend at Mt. Snow, Walt manages to meet many of his guests personally. "I get a great satisfaction out of talking with skiers," he says. "They're a pretty friendly bunch and most of them want to know all about how we do things. I try to answer their questions and make them feel at home. It makes people want to come back again."

SKI, FEBRUARY, 1958

## READER SERVICE DEPARTMENT

SKI editors, who do most of their own skiing late in the season, are particularly enthusiastic on the subject of spring and summer skiing. They know the snow is usually better, the climate warmer and your skiing more relaxed as the days get longer and the sun climbs higher over the horizon. This is as true of our own top ski areas, east and west, as of those in Europe. And for those free to travel, the ski season need never end. South America, New Zealand and Australia offer fine winter skiing in July, and spring skiing in August and September. For those skiers who want to know more about May to September skiing—where it is and how to get there—SKI provides below a special Reader Service. Just circle the appropriate key number on the coupon and mail to Reader Service Department, SKI Magazine, Hanover, N.H. Please enclose ten cents in coin or stamps to cover handling charges.

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# News in Brief.....

Heavy snows gave U. S. alpine teams an excellent opportunity for practice before the Christmas holidays. . . . First European races on agenda of U. S. men's team were giant slalom and slalom at Adelboden, with all top national teams competing—the Austrians entering all their best except Sailer, Molterer and Rieder. As Americans entered international competitive season, one racer commented: "Never has a FIS or Olympics been so wonderful. The coaches, the managers and team members are all doing a fine job and getting on harmoniously with each other." . . . Final tryouts for the U. S. nordic combined and cross-country teams were to take place at McCall, Ida., during the second week of last month. . . . The Canadian men's alpine team training at St. Moritz was divided into two groups early last month, one to compete in the Lauberhorn at Wengen, the other to remain in St. Moditz as participants in the Commonwealth Winter Games.

Howie Norton of Piedmont, Calif., "on his own" in Europe, placed higher than all but two U.S. FIS team skiers in the international slalom at

Adelboden. Bud Werner placed thirteenth and Tom Corcoran seventeenth in the race won by Charles Bozon of France . . . Werner also placed thirteenth in giant slalom the following day, which was won by Roger Staub of Switzerland . . . Nonie Foley won local Wengen New Year's slalom by nine seconds. Tom Corcoran placed second in the men's event. . . . in the Lauberhorn downhill at Wengen, Bud Werner came within three tenths of a second of Sailer's winning time. . . . In the women's events at Grindelwald, Sally Deaver paced the Americans by placing 5th in both giant slalom events. Linda Myers was the first American in the downhill with 9th position.

A snowless holiday season, the most disappointing within recent memory, was the lot of all eastern ski areas from Pennsylvania to Quebec. Area operators estimated losses at upward from twenty per cent of the anticipated total business for the entire season. For many skiers, able to get away only during the holidays, it represented a 100 per cent loss of skiing this year. Only skiing to be had was at areas

with artificial snowmaking, which at first were stymied by unseasonal high temperatures. By New Year's—when the more northern areas finally got snow—Bousquet's at Pittsfield, Mass., Laurel Mountain at Ligonier, Pa., Whitney's at Jackson, N.H., Mittersill at Franconia and Mt. Ascutney at Windsor, Vt., were all going strong, thanks to artificial snow.

The Finnish Ski Association has placed a ban on travel outside the country for its nordic competitors, who are expected to continue their training uninterrupted at Lahti, where the world championships in these events will be held during the first week in March. . . . The Norwegian Ski Association has made formal protest against the scheduled February dates of the 1960 Winter Olympic Games at Squaw Valley, holding that these interfere with other international and national competition schedules.

The Insurance Department of the National Ski Association has announced that up to mid-November some \$30,000.00 had been paid out to more than ten per cent of the skiers who bought NSA accident and equip-

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ment insurance. . . . Fair-traded Hart metal skis will be on sale this March—at ten per cent off. . . . The new 1958 winter sports guide to eastern and central Michigan may be obtained by contacting the East Michigan Winter Sports Council, Log Office, Bay City, Mich. . . . Sunshine Village at Banff is not being operated during the winter season this year, but will open for spring skiing on March 1. . . . Pierre and Lucille Ducis head the ski school at Catamount, Hillsdale, N. Y. this season. The couple formerly taught at Chalet Cochand, Ste. Marguerite, P. Q.

"CE 6-S-N-O-W" is a magic telephone number in Chicago, where the Metropolitan Ski Council has set up a snow reporting service. . . . Whiteface Ski Center, New York State's new major development, benefitted from the unseasonal holiday thaw as construction workers completed installations. . . . Mt. Killington, major ski area under construction near Rutland, Vt., is scheduled to open next December with two, perhaps three lifts. . . .

Hoodoo Bowl, famous Oregon ski center, has been placed upon the market. Interested parties may contact the owners care of SKI. . . . U. S. Eastern Amateur Ski Association charter flights are to proceed on schedule, despite a

switch in airlines last month. . . . Hans Thorner, popular moviemaker and ski pro of Manchester, Vt., heads the ski school at Birch Hill, new ski area featuring snowmaking just nine miles north of Brewster, N. Y., on route 22. . . .

George B. Berger, founding president of the Aspen Skiing Corp. and a leading citizen of Colorado, died at the age of fifty-two in early December. At the time of his death he held the offices of vice-president and treasurer of the corporation. . . . Don Rosenberg has been named to head the Karl Acker Swiss Ski School at Pico Peak, Rutland, Vt., where owner Acker has installed a complete new beginners' ski area. . . . Improvements made this year at Winter Park, Colo., popular ski and vacation area near Denver, cost approximately \$235,000.00 and include two new high-capacity T-bars. . . . Andy Tommy, one of Canada's top international competitors, has joined the staff of the Chantecler Ski School at Ste. Adele, P. Q. . . . Over 500 skiers danced at the Metropolitan Ski Council's ball at the Waldorf-Astoria, fundraising project for the ski patrol. . . .

New Hampshire's brand-new Passenger Tramway Safety Board has al-

ready received fifty-nine applications for registration and inspection from ski lift and tow operators. . . . The Cheboygan Daily Tribune, Mich., is again sponsoring a free ski school this season under direction of Harold Lee. . . . A committee of the East Michigan Winter Sports Council has been preparing a safety code for area operators in Michigan. . . . Cal O'Brien's outdoor program on station WEEI, Boston, is reporting on skiing conditions and events this season. Six nights a week, 11:10 p.m. . . . KLM Royal Dutch Airlines offers a booklet, "Skier's Guide to Europe," free of charge to those writing the airline at 430 Park Ave., New York 22, N.Y. . . . Art Tokle won the New Jersey State Championship jump, held at Bear Mountain for lack of snow across the Hudson, over a field of FIS team jumpers. . . .

Bill Sylvester of Manor Studios is showing ski films five nights a week during the ski season at the Wilmington, Vt., Town Hall for Mt. Snow audiences.

The official opening of the new Whiteface Ski Center at Wilmington, N.Y. was to take place January 25th with Gov. Averell Harriman and other dignitaries in attendance.

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